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The Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews

The Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews

Including Its Relation to the Developing Christology of the Primitive Church

By

HARRIS LACHLAN MacNEILL, PH.D.

Professor of New Testament Language and Literature

Brandon College, Brandon, Manitoba

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The author makes glad acknowledgment of indebtedness to all his instructors in the Department of New Testament Literature and Interpretation, but especially to Associate Professor Clyde Weber Votaw, who not only suggested the subject, but who has followed the work upon it with helpful suggestion and kindly criticism.

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II. INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE

The Epistle to the Hebrews, from many points of view, is one of the most remarkable and virile pieces of writing in the New Testament. From the literary point of view it stands supreme in the New Testament as the work of a conscious literary artist. This holds true even if we are not ready to go as far as von Soden[1] in attributing to the writer conscious and precise conformity to the rhetorical laws of Greek literary construction. In any case it is clear that the writer is perfectly at home in his use of the Greek language. It is vain to attempt to show that this epistle is a translation from Hebrew or Aramaic. If the author was himself a Jew, as seems altogether likely, he nevertheless had a thorough training in the use of Greek, for he has given us the best exhibition of good Greek in the New Testament.

[1] *Handcommentar zum Neuen Testament*, "Einleitung zu Hebräer," V, S. 10.

The effort to establish the identity of the author is probably a hopeless one. Fortunately the epistle itself enables us to gain a sufficiently clear and full picture of his personality and attitude. The case is somewhat the same with the readers. A full discussion of questions of introduction is not required here. It is only necessary to give a general statement with emphasis upon matters which have a bearing upon the Christology.

The *terminus ad quem* of the epistle is fortunately fixed about 95 A.D. by its evident use in Clement *Ad Cor.* 1, which was written about 96 A.D. Unfortunately the *terminus a quo* is not so certain, though according to the view here held there are various converging lines of evidence which point to 85 to 90 A.D. It must, however, be admitted that so far as specific statements go, the earlier date 65 to 70 A.D. is not impossible. The letter itself shows us that the writer and his readers belong to the second generation of Christians (2:3, 4). Their conversion lies considerably in the past (5:12). They have passed through one severe persecution, apparently shortly after their conversion (10:32), and, whether literally interpreted or not, "resisted unto blood" (12:4) implies that they are in the throes of another persecution in the face of which they are not manifesting the enthusiastic, courageous spirit which they manifested in the former persecution (12:12).

There is too great a tendency, in fixing dates by persecutions, to consider only the definite and widespread persecutions of the Roman government, viz., those of Claudius, Nero, Domitian, and Trajan. There may have been other persecutions, not merely local but comparatively widespread, in addition to the historical persecutions of the Roman government known to us. But in the case of the readers of this epistle, it seems very natural to consider the first persecution mentioned, to be the one under Nero (64 A.D.). This would fit nicely the date of their conversion (2:3; 10:32), while the persecution under Domitian (81–96 A.D.) would be the one in which the readers at present find themselves. Inasmuch as this persecution has not yet reached its height (12:4), one is inclined to place it in the earlier part of Domitian's reign. It is impossible to consider the second persecution as that under Trajan (98–117 A.D.), for that would bring us beyond our *terminus ad quem.* These facts would lead us to place the epistle about 85 A.D., perhaps rather shortly after that date.

Many still feel it an insuperable objection to any date after 70 A.D. that the writer should know of the destruction of Jerusalem with the cessation of all the sacrificial service of the temple and yet fail to clinch

his argument by reference to this great fact. And indeed such a passage as 8:4, which surely seems to imply that there are still those on earth who offer gifts according to the law, offers considerable difficulty. We know that such sacrificial service ceased after 70 A.D. That the old covenant and its institutions should be spoken of as "nigh unto disappearing" (8:13) presents the same difficulty. These and other similar references lead many to adopt the view that the epistle was written to warn the readers against lapsing back into Judaism and to place the epistle before 70 A.D. But the whole difficulty diminishes, even vanishes, if we remind ourselves repeatedly that the author's whole thought revolves, not around the temple in Jerusalem, but around the tabernacle in the wilderness. It may indeed be that the reason for this was just the fact that the temple service was gone, but it is much more likely that it was because the author had nothing to do with the temple at Jerusalem. Philo went to Jerusalem only once, so far as we know.[1] It may be that our author never saw the temple. At any rate it is clear that the picture which fills his mind is not that of the temple but that of the tabernacle of Old Testament Scripture. Moreover the importance of the destruction of Jerusalem for the purpose of dating documents of the period has been exaggerated. It is an event that is not often referred to in contemporary literature. The Greeks once fined a playwright for making reference in his play to the destruction of the splendid city of Miletus 494 B.C. The Jews may have felt a similar reserve in regard to mentioning the destruction of Jerusalem.

There are, on the other hand, references to Jerusalem which have more significance if the temple is destroyed (13:14). The present tenses which seem to be used of the temple sacrifices must be explained as historic presents. The verb in 8:13*b* is a present expressing a general truth, an inference from what precedes, and is understood by the author as applying to the Old Covenant when the quotation from Jeremiah was originally written. The difficulty of the statement in 8:4 is relieved at once when we keep to its context and notice that the writer is speaking of the tabernacle, not of the temple.

As regards the readers and their situation, indications point perhaps most plausibly, all things considered, to Rome; though the church at Antioch might well be the recipient of the letter written from Rome or Italy (13:24). Too much, perhaps, has been made of the question as to whether the readers were Jews or gentiles. That the church or churches addressed were a unit does not necessarily mean, as Zahn contends, that

[1] Philo, *De Providentia*, II, sec. 107.

the membership consisted either of all Jews or all gentiles.[1] There was unity in the Antioch church before the Judaizers came and stirred up trouble between the Jews and the gentiles. So with the church at Rome to which Paul wrote. If, as we have suggested, we are to think of the letter as addressed to a church or churches in Rome we may possibly see in Hebrews a testimony to the success of Paul's great Epistle to the Romans. The church was composed of Jews and gentiles, the latter predominating; and Paul wrote them chiefly with the purpose of forestalling some threatened Judaizing influence. His work here as elsewhere was successful and by the time Hebrews was written, possibly to the same church, the danger is over, the whole controversy has died down, and there is again no distinction between Jews and gentiles.

If it be objected that general statements in the letter can refer only to gentiles (3:12; 5:12; 6:1 ff.; 9:14), it may be replied that the difficulty is relieved by two considerations, viz., that the majority of readers were gentiles, and also that it is altogether likely that even the Jews among them were inclined to fall back into a state of materialistic and formal irreligion rather than back to their former faith. There were different types of Jews, especially among those of the Dispersion; and it is altogether natural that those in this church should fall into careless discouragement when they found that their new venture into Christianity was not fulfilling expectations. At any rate it is clear from the epistle that the author, who is thoroughly aware of their situation, fears, not the attractive power of any definite form of religion, but rather the subtle power of unbelief, indifference, and formalism. The whole weight and wording of his warnings is against a negative rather than a positive danger, against neglect (2:3), against losing their "boldness and boasting" (3:6), against an "evil heart of unbelief" (3:12) and the "deceitfulness" of sin (3:13), this latter phrase implying that they might find themselves in the fatal situation without being themselves aware of it.

Their danger was, in a measure, like that against which the ancient prophets thundered, the danger of being content to have the form of godliness without the power thereof. Therefore the exhortation to hold fast the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end (3:14, 15) as the essential condition of really being partakers of the Christ. With this agrees the rebuke of their backward and imperfect state in the

[1] Zahn, *Introduction to the New Testament*, II, 349. The discord in the Corinthian church was not at all racial; and per contra, at the time of the writing of Hebrews racial differences need not cause discord.

digression (5:11—6:20). So the exhortation (10:19 ff.) is full of thoughts which are naturally directed against listlessness, indifference, and neglect. In 10:29 the attitude pictured is one of neglect and despite of the grace received, and the warning of 10:31 would not be well directed to faithful observance of legalistic Judaism. It is rather a judgment on irreligion and godlessness. In fact the exhortations and warnings of the whole epistle (6:11, 12; 10:35, 36, 39), while they certainly imply a falling away from Christianity, imply little or nothing as to any positive form of religion which attracts the readers.

The warning of 13:9 ff. is perhaps an exception to this, in that the Christian readers seem to be attracted by some form of sacrificial meals which they think will strengthen their religious life but which the author feels are worthless for that purpose and have no place in Christianity. In this passage it is quite unnatural to make the "they" of vs. 10 denote the same persons as the "we" of the same verse, viz., Christian believers. The verse must be accepted as indicating some relation, however indirect ("strange," vs. 8), between the meats which are attractive to the readers and the Jewish customs. Even this would not necessitate the assumption of Jewish readers, for the propaganda of Hellenistic Judaism exerted just such a counter-attraction to Christianity over gentiles. But granted that it requires Jewish readers, this does not interfere with the thesis above expressed, viz., that the warnings indicate the main danger of the readers to be listlessness, formalism, lax morality, in fact a general religious criminal negligence without any special attention being paid to whether they are Jews or gentiles.

The contrast with Paul's Epistle to the Galatians is marked in that in the latter the defection is a positive one to a positive form of teaching clearly revealed in the epistle itself. The cause of the defection in Hebrews is in the main evidently twofold, viz., persecution both more intense (12:3 ff.) and less intense (13:13), and disappointment in the hopes that they had entertained in embracing Christianity (6:13–20; 10:25; 10:36; 12:1). Trying outward circumstances, combined with the failure of the lapse of years to bring the good things promised in Christ, had evidently made them secretly or openly question whether Christianity really contained that which could adequately reward such sacrifice and suffering.[1]

It is to meet this grave tendency to formalism, materialism, irreligion, and atheism that the author writes this epistle. He has been with them or at least has known their circumstances from the first. For some

[1] McGiffert, *The Apostolic Age*, 1903, p. 469.

reason he is now separated from them. But the need is so urgent and their situation so grave that, though he expects to return to them soon in person, he must write this word of exhortation (13:22) to arrest their threatened defection. And it is here that the christological significance of the epistle becomes evident. For the author feels that the grave situation, their threatened defection, is in a large measure due to their own ignorance of the glory, power, and finality of their Christian profession. They do not fully comprehend that which they have professed —its significance, its grandeur, its supremacy, its finality. And the sum-total of all this supreme significance of their profession is found in Jesus Christ, the Son of God who is High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. The whole epistle is an exposition of the mediatorial work of Christ based upon the supreme significance of his person.

It is tempting but futile to continue speculation upon the identity of the author. Some modern writers think favorably of Barnabas.[1] For Luther's famous suggestion of Apollos it can at least be said that Apollos could very well have written it; there is no evidence whatever that he actually did write it.[2] For the purpose of this study, it is not necessary to determine the identity of the author.

It is well however to get a clear conception of the writer's training and attitude of mind, and so to speak, of the general climatic conditions of thought which could produce such a writing. It is clear that the author has been under Philonian influence more than any other New Testament writer.[3] This marks him off with more or less distinctness from those with whom his teaching has a certain amount of agreement.[4] It does not mean that the author must have been an Alexandrian in the sense of having lived or even having received his training there. But he was a more or less technical disciple of Philonian views and methods before his conversion to Christianity. It is to be noted, however, that Alexandrianism was a part of the general religious milieu of the time to a greater degree than has hitherto been recognized.

It is easy to make too much of real or alleged blunders in connection with his descriptions of Old Testament ritual. But there is, nevertheless, an element of uncertainty that suggests that the author gained his knowledge of Judaism by academic study. It was not altogether native to him. Philonian views and methods were native to him but his knowledge of both Judaism and Christianity came by earnest continued

[1] Ayles, Goodspeed.

[2] McGiffert, *op. cit.*, p. 480, n. 2.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 478.

[4] Paul and the primitive church.

study and meditation.[1] It will be shown in detail later that the author was also influenced, at least indirectly, by elements from the mystery-religions of his time. If a Jew, as is likely, he was a Jew of the Dispersion, not a Palestinian Jew.

Where, outside of Palestine, could such an author have written such a writing? Possibly in Alexandria, but more likely in Asia Minor or Syria where the Christian movement secured such a strong foothold. The atmosphere here was strongly Philonian. Rome is the most plausible destination, but there is nothing incongruous in supposing the church at Antioch to be the recipient of the letter. Perdelwitz combines the two.[2]

To sum up, the Epistle to the Hebrews was written *ca.* 85 A.D. by an anonymous writer, probably a Jew of the Dispersion, who, before his conversion, had had a more or less technical training in Alexandrian philosophy and had been a careful student of classic Judaism. He writes probably to a church or section of a church in Rome, but possibly to the church at Antioch or to some other church in Syria or Asia Minor. This church is composed probably of both gentiles and Jews, the former predominating, but there are no signs of division within the church itself. They have become disheartened, however, through hopes deferred and because of renewed persecution, and they are ready to fall back into empty formalism or into actual repudiation of their Christian profession. The author writes to call them back to their first faith and enthusiasm, and as a means to this end he sets forth the supreme greatness and glory of Christ, the Son of God, and of the salvation which he has brought to them.

III. GENERAL DOCTRINAL VIEWS AND FRAMEWORK

A brief discussion of the general method and doctrinal content of the epistle is necessary to an adequate understanding of its Christology. From the theological no less than from the literary point of view the Epistle to the Hebrews is one of the most thoroughly and consciously artistic of all the New Testament writings. From the literary point of view this is made manifest not only by the writer's splendid diction, his play upon words, and the general rhythmic movement of his language,[3] but also by the dignity and even sublimity of his thought. The letter

[1] McGiffert, *op. cit.*, p. 481.

[2] Das literarische Problem des Hebräerbriefs," *Z.f.N.T.W.*, 1910, S. 59, 105.

[3] Von Soden in *Handcommentar zum N.T.*, "Einleitung zu Hebräer," IV.

reveals a carefully constructed plan with skilful transitions and judicious insinuations of words and anticipations of ideas.

But his general theological attitude is that which is of importance in this connection. It is to be noted first of all that the letter is not in any sense an exhaustive theological treatise. It manifests some traits which are somewhat puzzling and which incline many to think that it is a treatise or homily rather than a letter. But it bears the marks of a genuine letter to people with whom the writer had been closely associated and in whom he was personally interested. It is therefore eminently practical. Certain great doctrinal features stand out clearly in the epistle, though the letter does not furnish a complete presentation of Christianity as the writer conceived it. There are many gaps, much that is assumed, and the doctrinal ideas that are presented are such as contribute to the intensely practical purpose of the writer.

Though Alexandrian in training, the author has a somewhat elaborate eschatology that is in general harmony with that of the early Christians. The writer considers himself and his readers to stand at the close of one of the great periods or "aeons" of the world's history (1:2) and to be looking forward to the second great period or "aeon" which is imminent and which will be ushered in at the parousia of Christ (10:25, 37). Between these two great periods are what seem to be days of transition, the end of the one period and the beginning of the next, days which the rabbis called the "days of the Messiah" before the messianic kingdom proper. These last days are the period of trial and persecution for the readers and believers, and the whole purpose of the writer is directed toward strengthening them for these days until the better days of the second period shall have fully set in.

In this second period occurs the judgment of God which looms large and terrible in the vision of the writer. In one passage the judgment is put after death (9:27), but not necessarily immediately after death. The general judgment is evidently put at the inauguration of the second period immediately after the coming of Christ. The faithful and obedient pass into full salvation, the realization and enjoyment of the promises; the neglectful and disobedient into destruction (10:39; cf. 2:3; 5:9; 6:9; 11:40). This judgment is final (6:2). It is repeatedly ascribed to God (10:30, 31; 12:9; 12:23), though the writer's method of ascribing an act to God (2:10) and again to Christ (1:10) or to Christ under God (1:2*b*) does not absolutely forbid the thought of Christ having charge of judgment under God. Of the intervening state of the faithful who have died the writer says nothing definitely, though he

implies that they are in some sort of close association with God and Jesus and the angels (12:23). In life, the faithful not only anticipate but in large measure realize by faith the salvation which comes in its fulness only after the second coming of Christ.

As the old and the new revelations, though different, are yet one (1:1, 2), so the old and the new are also one in that the good things brought by Christ are conceived as another, a new covenant. This new covenant has come in God's good time according to promise (1:2; 8:8, 13). It is better than the old in every way, its superiority being pictured under the Platonic-Philonic concept of type and reality. The old was but shadow, the new is substancè. The old was type, the new is reality. The old was earthly, the new is heavenly. And this superiority belongs to the new covenant all through. It had a superior priesthood in Jesus who was High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. It had a superior law, written upon the heart. It had a superior sacrifice, even the perfect, final, and effective sacrifice of Jesus himself in his voluntary death. It had the perfect sanctuary, not of this world but in heaven itself in the very presence of God. It may be, though this is hardly likely, that the writer considered the old covenant with all its ceremonies and ordinances as in every particular typical and in everything having its real fulfilment in Christianity, the new covenant.

While the old covenant, because of its weakness and imperfection, failed to accomplish its real purpose—forgiveness of sins and true fellowship between God and his covenant people—Christianity, the new covenant mediated by Jesus, secures this very thing, namely, full and final forgiveness, cleansing of the conscience, entrance into the very presence of God, and finally perfection and participation in God's own Sabbath rest. This is the "eternal salvation" (5:9) which is due to Jesus as its cause and is often spoken of as an inheritance, as inheriting the promises (6:17; 9:15). The chief thought of the epistle, however, is that of Jesus as eternal High Priest who mediates this covenant and secures this salvation to those who come to God through him (7:25). The writer fails to make quite clear the picture he gives of the future age after the parousia of Christ. At times he seems to conceive it locally and materially (2:5) as a renovated earth (12:27); again as the kingdom of abiding spiritual reality (12:28), the heavenly Jerusalem (12:22). It is likely that the blending of the two ideas did not seem incongruous to him.

The virtues of the Christian life are faith, hope, love, fidelity, obedience, patience, and hospitality. Most prominent in the writer's

presentation are faith and obedience. These are considered as the essential conditions, and yet not as the purchase price of salvation. They are closely related in the writer's thought, in fact, are almost interchangeable. Faith is the anticipatory realization of the unseen and invisible which impels to obedience and endurance (11:1).

The universal fatherhood and sovereignty of God are emphasized in the epistle (12:9). Jesus as Son is heir of all things, but always under God. He is victor over death and the devil, as the deliverer of his people (2:15); himself the great shepherd of the sheep raised from the dead by God (13:20). But the chief picture of Jesus' person, character, and work is presented in the description of him as High Priest of the new order, a picture drawn on the background of Judaism.

It is thus clear that the comparison with Judaism is fundamental in the presentation of the writer, not only because he is firmly convinced that the roots of this new faith are found in Judaism, but also because for the people among whom he moved and for whom he wrote—whether Jew or gentile—Judaism was accepted without dispute as supreme in the realm of religion. Only Christianity could be compared to it; but as the writer compares them it is clear that not only is Christianity, the new covenant, far better—it is the perfect and final fulfilment of Judaism. It is the final religion of which Judaism was only a shadow or symbol. And it is here that the peculiar world-view of the writer comes to his aid. He is an Alexandrian, steeped in the ideas and phraseology of that school, probably before his conversion a more or less technical disciple of that school. With the utmost ease and naturalness he does what every Christian thinker and preacher does, viz., runs the content of his new Christian experience into the forms of his own training and thinking. One of these Alexandrian thought-forms was the contrast of the "intelligible" and the "perceptible" world, the world of ideas and the world of sense, the world of the eternal and permanent, and the world of the temporal and passing, the world of the unseen perfect realities and the world of the visible imperfect copies. Using this familiar Alexandrian contrast, the writer puts the stamp of perfection and finality upon Christianity by identifying it with the "intelligible" world of abiding ideas and realities. The new religion of Jesus is supreme, perfect, final, eternal, and that which makes it the final religion is the person (i.e., order, rank) and work of Jesus Christ. Though this thought-content is cast in a philosophical mold it is clearly the product not of his philosophy, but of his own Christian experience and that of his fellow-Christians.

I. HUMAN ELEMENTS IN THE CHRIST-CONCEPTION OF THE EPISTLE

1. THE WRITER'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS

In considering the christological material proper, the first question that naturally arises is that which relates to the nature and extent of the writer's knowledge of the historical Jesus. It is clear that the writer considers Jesus to be the Messiah and that he holds to the Palestinian eschatological conception of the division of time into ages or aeons made by the coming of the Messiah. This would not be conclusively shown by his frequent use of the phrases "unto the aeon" and "unto the aeons of aeons" (13:21) which might be general expressions meaning "forever." But that the author did hold to the messianic eschatological division of time is shown by such expressions as "the coming aeon." It is shown also by the phrase with which he describes God's message as given in a Son compared with that given long ago in the prophets, the phrase "at [the] end of these days." This phrase denotes the period of Jesus' life and teaching while he was on earth, that which is called today the period of his public ministry. The phrase is a thoroughly Jewish one and reveals an element in the writer that is distinct from his Philonian tendency, for it is decidedly messianic in its tone. It represents the viewpoint especially of later Judaism, though similar conceptions are common in the Septuagint. There is the *αἰὼν οὗτος*, "this age," set sharply over against the *αἰὼν μέλλων*, "[the] coming age." The "days of the Messiah" are evidently conceived as falling, partly at the end of "this aeon" and partly at the beginning of the "coming aeon," but the appearance of the Messiah is regularly placed at the end of "this aeon." The phrase *ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν*, "at [the] last of the days" (or its equivalent), which in the Old Testament is regularly used to denote future time, comes to refer generally in late Judaism and the New Testament to the closing of "this age." The writer, therefore, makes free to add *τούτων*, thus making the reference to this age more emphatic. The expression, then, denotes the same as *ἐπὶ συντελείᾳ τῶν αἰώνων* (9:26), found in the Synoptic Gospels. It is also equivalent to *καιρὸς διορθώσεως* (9:10), "time of reformation." All of these terms denote the period of Christ's life, ministry, death, and exaltation.

It may be said here that the writer does not distinguish sharply between the "last of these days" and the "age to come." But the distinction is fundamental with him nevertheless. The world to come is the theme of his epistle (2:5). The old covenant belongs to "this age," the new covenant to the "age to come." But the "age to come" is initiated by the first appearance of Jesus and consummated by his second appearance (9:28*b*). This consummation at the second appearance of Christ is the "day" that is approaching (10:25*b*). This word "approaching" has, probably, a larger content than temporal, and indicates the pressure of the powers of the "age to come" into the "last of these days" (6:5). There are, then, only two clearly defined periods in the world-view of the writer, "this age" and "the age to come." But the powers of the "age to come" are in a measure manifested and realized in the present. The "last of these days" is at once the close of "this age" and the beginning of the "age to come." And the "age to come," when consummated at the second appearing of Christ, is the inhabited world that is to be (1:6), or the heavenly Jerusalem (12:22).

The phrase "at the end of these days" (1:2), therefore, denotes the time then present to the writer but as evidently goes back to, and includes, the period of the ministry and teaching of Jesus. But all that the introductory verse tells us is that in these final and momentous days, as contrasted with the days of old, God spoke a message in a Son, later in the epistle identified with Jesus (2:9), who as representative man suffered humiliation in his death and, being made perfect by these sufferings, was exalted to his present estate because of them. In these verses the fact of the death of Jesus and the sufferings in connection therewith are doubtless in the writer's mind but are not in any way historically described. The death of Jesus, however, is the supreme act, as we learn not only from this passage but from many other passages in the epistle.

Of more weight for this section is the view of the writer as to what was necessary that this supreme act of sacrifice in death might be effected and thus death and its master, the devil, be subdued and the children of God delivered. This was, that Jesus himself should share in flesh and blood as did the children whom he would deliver. For it is the conception of the writer that the deliverer must be altogether like those whom he would save. Strictly speaking, however, these are not references to the historical Jesus but rather an exposition of how the writer conceived and explained to himself and his readers the genuine humanity of Jesus. We have here indeed the conception of the writer that Jesus

was a being who did thus condescend to participate in flesh and blood, i.e., in genuine human nature.

The writer in no way attempts to explain *how* this participation in full human nature came to be. But this should not lead us to discount or doubt what he here plainly means to state, viz., that this Jesus was not a ghost or angel, for it was not with ghosts or angels that he had to do but with men who should become his followers (2:16). He therefore also shared in, took part in, this genuine human nature with all that it essentially involved of suffering and temptation in order that he might be qualified to deliver men. The author has the conception of a being, in part at least, developing under the strain of hard experience. The result of this experience was a genuine sympathy with men in their weaknesses, and an ability to minister seasonable help to those in distress.

But a more decided reference to the events of the life of Jesus is found in 5:7–10, "who in the days of his flesh," etc. This is a distinct reference to the historical life of Jesus, specifically to his experience in the Garden of Gethsemane. The phrase, "with strong crying and tears," while not at all out of harmony with the account of Mark and Matthew, throws much more emphasis upon a natural human weakness on the part of Jesus. This additional emphasis may possibly be due to the author himself, but much more likely it is a variant from oral tradition which seems to ring true to the actual behavior of Jesus in Gethsemane. In either case it is a touch which puts striking emphasis upon the author's view of the genuine humanity of Jesus. The rest of the description likewise puts emphasis upon the truly human and submissive aspect of Jesus' attitude in this crisis, in order to emphasize the point of the preceding verses, viz., that Jesus did not take this office of High Priest to himself but was called to it by God. The attitude of the devout, God-fearing man is ascribed to him in the phrase "having been heard for his godly fear." This seems to be the best and most natural meaning to give to this phrase and it need not call for anything more by way of an answer to his prayer than is implied in the Matthew and Markan accounts where Jesus is finally strengthened to say "Thy will be done."

The whole picture of this section is so characteristically that of a devout, God-fearing man in the midst of suffering and trial, that the writer feels constrained to add that "although he was a Son" he thus suffered and learned obedience by what he suffered. The writer was quite conscious of the hiatus between this picture of a devout, praying, tempted, God-fearing man and the conception of a Son to whom one

would expect obedience to be natural, and not require such arduous discipline and suffering for its development. This phrase, "even though being a Son," in this particular context shows plainly that the author applies the word Son to Jesus as he would not and does not apply it to men in general or to any other created beings. Suffering is the common lot of men. It is the means of learning obedience for all Christians (12:4ff.), but the strange thing is that it is also fitting and necessary even for Jesus, a Son. It is just this submission and victory in and through this experience of suffering that makes him efficient in his work as Savior and High Priest and causes God to address him as such.

As to the manner in which the Son partook of flesh and blood, the writer has nothing specific to say. His statement that it is evident our Lord sprang out of Judah (7:14) may only echo the common tradition of the church independently of the question as to whether this descent is traced through Joseph or Mary. It can hardly be used as evidence that Mary was of David's line, nor can it be used to prove that the author held the doctrine of the miraculous conception. The author refers to Jesus' coming into the world (10:5) by quotation of Ps. 40:6–8, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body didst thou prepare for me." The writer is here following the Septuagint, as he regularly does. This gives him an entirely different thought from that of the original Hebrew, "mine ears hast thou pierced"; but this need cause no difficulty as it is the writer's own thought that is being considered. The words evidently denote for him the incarnation of Jesus. It might be considered that this phrase favored the miraculous conception, but it would surely be pressing the words too far to say that they demand this view. In fact the words might be used of anyone by one who holds the doctrine of pre-existence, as the speaker in Wisdom of Solomon says (8:19, 20): "Nay rather, being good, I came into a body undefiled," although he had just said (7:2): "And in the womb of my mother was I moulded into flesh in the time of ten months, being compacted in blood of the seed of man," etc. It cannot be said, therefore, that the writer of Hebrews anywhere reveals how he conceived the incarnation to have taken place. This may be considered as an argument so far forth that he thought of it as perfectly normal. In any case it is this body which has been prepared for him by God which makes possible his offering and sacrifice (10:10), which in turn leads to sanctification. It is this body that is the veil, and the offering of it in death is the removal of the veil which opens the new and living way into the true holy place (10:20).

It seems evident that although the writer is not concerned with the

earthly life and ministry and teaching of Jesus, he is nevertheless reliably informed about it (2:3) and sets a high value upon it. He speaks of the great salvation spoken first by the Lord himself. With him, as with Paul, it is not a question of ignorance but rather of emphasis and of the particular purpose in view. Where the events of Jesus' life specially illustrate his purpose and his thought he shows his knowledge of them (5:7). It is true of course that this knowledge is not first-hand (2:3), but full weight should be given to the author's statement that he possessed good second-hand testimony. This passage however does not necessarily or even probably mean that the author was a personal companion of the apostles. The writer's description of the course of events in the primitive church during the Apostolic age is an accurate one (2:4) judging it by other accounts. On the whole it would seem that the author has a fuller knowledge of the historic Jesus than he has occasion to manifest or use. His work is rather interpretative and theological. His interest centers about the sacrificial death and High-Priestly work of Jesus.

II. HUMAN ELEMENTS IN HARMONY WITH HIS HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

In advancing beyond actual events to consider what appear to be genuinely human elements ascribed to the character of Jesus by the writer, there is found an emphasis quite beyond that of Paul in the same sphere. Indeed, it may be said that in appreciation of human character and its development in the midst of work and suffering the writer of Hebrews is far in advance of other New Testament writers with the possible exception of the synoptists.

There are some passages in the epistle which, while evidently based on some knowledge of the historical Jesus, at the same time exhibit a development toward the speculative or theological, yet without going beyond human characteristics. Such, for instance, is the call to consider the patient endurance which Jesus manifested in the face of the senseless and inconsistent opposition at the hands of his opponents, called sinners (12:3). The writer evidently has in mind more particularly the actions of the rulers, the people, and probably the Roman soldiers in connection with Jesus' trial and crucifixion. The word "such" of vs. 3 points back naturally to "endured the cross, despising the shame" of vs. 2. But the point to be noted is that the human attribute of patient endurance in the face of exasperating opposition against righteousness is here emphasized. It is a characteristic of Jesus' attitude under persecution which is held up as an example to the readers.

The thoughts in 12:2 are similar. There are a number of difficulties in this verse which touch vital points. The chief cause of difference of opinion is as to whether these statements apply to Jesus in his earthly life or to the Son in his pre-existent state. One is tempted with the older interpreters (and indeed some of the latest; cf. von Soden, Goodspeed) to take this passage as a parallel in substance and color to Paul's famous statement in Phil. 2:6 and perhaps the original and natural meaning of ἀντί, viz., "instead of," would seem to favor this view. But it is against this view that no such thought is found elsewhere in the epistle, and its occurrence here, while not inconsistent with the author's view of Jesus, seems strange and the interpretation which finds it here is very likely the result of the widespread influence of the Pauline passage and possibly of the view of Pauline authorship. This is the more likely in that, while the context in the Philippian passage leaves no doubt as to the reference being to the pre-existent Christ, the context in the Hebrews passage is decidedly against such a reference. In both passages Jesus (Phil. 2:6, "Christ," "Christ Jesus") is presented as an example —in the Philippian passage as an example of splendid self-denial and sacrifice, in the Hebrews passage as an example of patient endurance in the face of persecuting opposition and ridicule. But it is just this difference that turns the scale in favor of reference to the earthly life of Jesus in the Hebrews passage. The whole exhortation is to patient endurance as exemplified in the attitude of Jesus in the midst of his trying earthly experiences (cf. vs. 3 which is closely connected with the previous verse by "for"). It may be answered that this might still be true with the view which refers the "joy" to the preincarnate life of Jesus. But such reference to a "joy" of the preincarnate life would at least be a disconcerting thought detracting from the real point of the exhortation. It is therefore more natural to translate "because of the joy that was set before him" and interpret the "joy" to be that of the "crowning with glory and honor" with the sons whom he leads to glory with him. This view is favored, too, by the fact that while there are no parallels to the former view in the epistle, there are parallels to the latter, viz., 1:9 and 2:9. This, then, means that, in the view of the writer, the anticipated feeling of joy, the courage that endured the cross, the patience that bore contradiction, ridicule, and shame were all of them genuine human characteristics of the earthly Jesus which constituted him, quite above the heroes of faith enumerated in chap. 11, the supreme example to the sorely tempted readers of the epistle.

But the secret of this much-needed endurance is faith and this again

is a true human quality characteristic of the earthly Jesus, and is expressed in this verse by "author and perfecter of faith" and emphasized repeatedly by the writer throughout the epistle. It was by no divine magic, no mere "breath, turn of eye, wave of hand," that he "joined issue with death," but by the power of that genuinely human faith which had inspired others in the past, faith in the characteristic sense of the writer (11:1) which is convinced of things unseen and gives substance to things hoped for. This is another reason for translating the phrase "because of the joy that was set before him," since, so translated, it presents a splendid example of a high human faith in the writer's characteristic sense which is entirely fitting in this context but which would be quite lost by the other translation. Faith is simply unwavering confidence in the hopes and promises that relate to the future. This it is that begets endurance in the hard lot of the present, and it was just this confidence in the joy that lay before him that enabled Jesus to bear the cross. This same faith is evident in the passage already considered (5:7–10), although faith is not there named.

The writer, therefore, places Jesus in the same class in regard to faith as that in which all believers in God are placed (11:6; cf. 2:13). But the phrase of 12:2, "author and perfecter of faith," puts Jesus, in another sense, in a class by himself as supreme exponent and example of this faith. The word translated "author" denotes primarily "chief leader" or "captain," a use common in the Septuagint. But the word also shades readily into the idea of "author" or "cause." In 2:10 the context almost requires "captain" or "leader," but not, perhaps, to the exclusion of "author" or "cause," which latter would at any rate express an idea clearly held by the writer (5:9). In this passage (12:2), again, the context favors taking ἀρχηγός as "captain" or "leader," i.e., in the sense of supreme example or exponent of faith as an active principle in human life. Since the idea of faith is so emphatic and characteristic in this writer, there is no adequate reason for giving the word faith in this passage any meaning (as, e.g., the Christian system) different from that in the rest of the epistle. It denotes here also that attitude of thought and life which confidently anticipates the future and realizes and acts in view of, the unseen. Of all the heroes of faith Jesus, though not the first in time, is the first in rank, the great exemplar, the supreme exponent of this attitude of faith.

Closely related to this truly human characteristic of faith in Jesus is that of faithfulness or fidelity. To Moses and Jesus alike (3:2) this quality is assigned; but to Moses as servant (3:5), to Jesus as Son (3:6).

This quality of faithfulness is also assigned to Jesus as High Priest (2:17), and with it is combined the quality of mercy (2:17), which the context shows is also attributed to him as a human acquirement, gained by his human experience. And on this last quality of mercy in its various shades the author lays great emphasis, in what appear at first sight to be two different ways but which really blend into one. Jesus is subject to suffering and temptation exactly (παραπλησίως, 2:14) as other men. This is described as having two objects in view, first, that he might become a merciful and faithful High Priest (2:17), the adjectives here used perhaps corresponding respectively to the verbs in another passage (συνπαθῆσαι, 4:15), "to sympathize," and (μετριοπαθεῖν, 5:2), "to deal moderately or fairly"; secondly, that the captain of salvation might himself be perfected (2:10).

It is probable, however, that these two apparently divergent results really blend, in that the perfecting of Jesus consists in the fact that through suffering and temptation he becomes a merciful and faithful High Priest and leader. But the notion of τελείωσις involves more than this. In 2:10 the context indicates that it denotes that condition which leads, dominates, and commands effectually. According to the psalm quoted, the dominion was promised to man. But man has not proved worthy of it, with the exception of Jesus who, though humbled for a season, through the very sufferings of his humiliation, has gained that perfection which secures or will secure to him this universal dominion. As an accompaniment or result of this high condition of perfection he is crowned with glory and honor. In 5:9 these two shades of the notion of perfection, viz., ability to save and inner worth or character, are more closely joined. It is held by many that τελείωσις denotes in this epistle only official perfection, i.e., ability to save men through sympathy.[1] But to speak of Jesus as learning obedience from that which he suffered shows the conception of the development of a devout character of personal worth in relation to God. The passage 7:28 further shows that this perfection denotes a condition of character which has become superior to and therefore now free from the weakness of the flesh that continually attends other men, even priests. This weakness, indeed, Jesus has shared in the days of his flesh (5:2, 7); and memory of experiences in it still abides with him (2:18) to give him sympathy and fairness (5:2; 4:15). But the state of perfection free from this weakness is ascribed to him, and he is therefore described in the terms of 7:26 as "holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and made

[1] So A. B. Davidson, *Hebrews*, pp. 207 f.; cf. Perdelwitz, *op. cit.*, S. 105 f.

higher than the heavens," being perfected forevermore. This last passage indicates that, as will be shown later, there are elements from the mystery-religions, in the writer's conception of perfection.

III. GENERAL STATEMENT

The above goes to support the statement that, with the possible exception of the synoptists, there is no other writing in the New Testament which throws into such bold relief the human elements in the personality of Jesus. And it is a question whether the synoptists should be excepted. For they set out with the purpose of giving an account of the life and teaching of Jesus while on earth. It is therefore only natural that they should have a larger amount of the human element.

The peculiar characteristic of the writer to the Hebrews is that he views character developmentally and applies this developmental view to the character of Jesus. The fact that the language of 5:14 refers rather to the discernment of true and false teaching does not alter the fact that the language and thought is Stoic and was generally used to refer to conduct and to the development of character. And the fact that the writer uses this language implies that he would hold the same view of development in character. The language is probably mediated to the writer through later Stoicism and through Philo.[1] At any rate this developmental view is the one that the writer presents of Jesus with an emphasis and an insight that is unusual in the New Testament.

[1] The language of 5:14 reminds one of the Stoic Wise Man; cf. Philo, *Leg. Alleg.*, III, 64, p. 94 *E;* 83, p. 104 *D;* cf. Sanday, *Christologies, Ancient and Modern*, p. 180.

II. TRANSCENDENT ELEMENTS IN THE CHRIST-CONCEPTION OF HEBREWS

I. THE THREE PERIODS IN JESUS' CAREER

Preparatory to a consideration of the transcendent elements in the Christ-conception of the writer of Hebrews, it may be well to present a survey of the writer's conception of the total career of Jesus Christ.

The author considers that there were two pivotal points in the total career of this person for whom his most common appellation is Jesus. The first of these is described as "sharing in flesh and blood" (an aorist tense), because his brethren whom he would save from the fear of death partook of these. It was, therefore, necessary that he be made like his brethren in all things (2:14, 17). Again this is referred to (10:5*a*) as coming "into the world," and in the same verse it is described from the divine point of view in the words of Ps. 40:6 ff. which are interpreted messianically and therefore put in the mouth of Jesus as he is conceived to address God saying, "a body didst thou prepare for me." The author gives no hint as to how he conceived this incarnation to have taken place. It is simply stated as a pivotal point, a coming into the world, which doubtless means an entrance into this human life of men upon earth, the period spoken of as "the days of his flesh" (5:7).

The second pivotal point in the career of this Jesus is one that cannot be so clearly defined, but which may best be stated as his entrance upon his exalted state, which is described as taking his seat at the right hand of God (1:13) by the command of God himself. This event in the career of Jesus is frequently mentioned in the epistle (10:12; 10:13; 10:37; 12:2). It is referred to as an entrance into the heavenly world (6:20), the real sanctuary (9:24), heaven itself, as the first is referred to as an entrance into this world, this earthly life (10:5*a*). Closely associated with this event, though not identical in point of time, are the death (10:12*a*), resurrection (13:20*a*), ascension (4:14*a*), and anointing of Jesus (1:9*b*).

In addition to these two pivotal points, there are other events in the career of Jesus less definitely indicated. How, for instance, did the writer conceive Jesus to have been or to have become the Son of God? In 1:5 and 5:5 the author seems to consider the person Jesus to have been at a certain fixed time constituted and hailed Son by God. Not to

any of his fellows, the angels (1:9*b*), did God ever address such words; but to this person called Jesus he said, "Thou art my Son, I today have begotten thee, and again, I will be to him a Father and he shall be to me a Son." But the author does not enable us to discern clearly when that time was. It must be inferred from 5:8 that Jesus was considered Son during his earthly period and therefore the reference can hardly be to his resurrection (as in Rom. 1:4) or to his exaltation. There is no evidence to show that these words contain a specific reference either to the eternal generation or to the incarnation. If they are not to be taken as denoting a fixed point at which Jesus was constituted and hailed Son by adoption it must simply be considered a highly figurative, rhetorical way of recognizing in time the Sonship of Jesus which the writer considers continual and timeless. This view might be taken without going so far as to say with von Soden that "today" in the writer's mind actually denoted the timeless eternity of God. The writer's eschatological division of time forbids giving this meaning to the word, especially in the discussion of the "rest of God" in the third and fourth chapters (cf. 3:13; 4:7).

Another special point in the career of Jesus would seem to be indicated in 5:5 where it is said that the Christ did not glorify himself to become High Priest but rather that the honor of appointment came from God who had said to him, "Thou art my Son. I today have begotten thee"; and who also said "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." But here again it does not seem that the writer concerns himself with being precise in regard to a time when Christ thus became High Priest. It must be recognized that the whole framework of Old Testament ritual, though viewed and set forth by the writer as proof of what he presents, is in reality only a fitting but imperfect and incomplete illustration or analogy of what Jesus was and did. In other words, what is true of New Testament writers in general is especially true of the writer of Hebrews—they see Jesus in the Old Testament only *ex post facto*. There is something startling in the analogies, or at least in the impression made by their sum-total, and one may not lightly say that the author's elaborate system of analogies between the old and the new covenants is only an ingenious patchwork. It is the same God who spake to the fathers in the prophets and who speaks at last in a Son (1:2). There is a genuine unity. But the point is, that what is primary with this writer, as with all the New Testament writers, is the impression of Jesus himself. The Old Testament is seen from the standpoint of the impression of Jesus; it is not Jesus that is seen from the standpoint of the Old Testament.

For this reason it is plain that, to say nothing of the analogies not being proofs, many of them are imperfect and even misleading analogies. There need be nothing surprising in this. The surprise rather is that the author finds so much that contributes splendidly to the exposition of the new in the ritual of the old. But it would surely be unwise of us today to try to press the analogies farther than the author himself has pushed them. This many are inclined to do (e.g., Bruce) when they try to state a definite time at which Jesus became High Priest. The author perhaps has in mind that, as entrance into the Holiest was the great act of the Aaronic high priest, so Jesus when he passed through the heavens (4:14) and became manifested on men's behalf in the very presence of God (9:24) entered upon his Priesthood. And most of what is said on this point in the epistle attributes his High-Priestly work to this stage (cf. 7:24; 8:3; 9:14). But the writer also considers him priest outside of this sphere (7:27; 9:14; 10:10), especially in offering himself once for all in death. It would seem therefore that it is forcing the author into too precise a consideration of time to compel him to say just when Jesus became High Priest. This and many other difficulties in interpreting the Priesthood and High Priesthood of Jesus arise from forcing the typology of the epistle, from forgetting that in reality the typology is an illustration *ex post facto* and not a proof. In the view of the writer Jesus' High-Priestly acts constitute him High Priest rather than any inauguration to his office at a specific time.

Still one other point appears of signal importance in the career of Jesus, viz., that at which all his enemies are to be made the footstool of his feet. This is no doubt identical with the time of his second appearance in the world of men (1:6), which is also to be the point of time when the full salvation is brought in (9:28), when the full *sabbatismos* or rest of God is realized (4:9), when all the faithful of the old and the new covenants shall together realize the fulfilment of God's promise of full perfection, delayed so long for the sake of those of the latter days (11:39, 40). The writer sees this day approaching (10:25*b*) and therefore urges greater earnestness, diligence, and endurance; for in the words of Habakkuk the coming one will come quickly (10:37). Associated with the events of this time is the idea of the new heavens and the new earth so far as it is held by this author (12:26, 27), and the complete establishment of the kingdom of God, perfect and unchangeable (12:28, 29). This subordinate point of time, therefore, is one which the author presents with much more singleness and definiteness than either that of the acquirement of the Sonship or that of the acquirement of the Priesthood.

By the two pivotal points already indicated which we may call the incarnation and the exaltation, the career of Jesus as presented by the writer is divided into three definite states or stages which may be termed the period of pre-existence, the earthly period of the days of his flesh, and the period of exaltation. They might be termed technically, pre-incarnate, incarnate, and postincarnate. These are sharply defined but it is clear that the epistle considers them as different stages in the career of one and the same person. The most common name which the writer uses is the simple historical name Jesus, while the most exalted name is Son or Son of God, though these latter are titles rather than names. One would almost expect him to confine the use of the name Jesus to the period of the days of his flesh, but he does not do so.

As to the preincarnate period it is stated of this person Jesus that he made the worlds ("aeons," 1:2; 1:10 ff.), that he was the effulgence of God's glory and the express image of his substance, that he sustained the universe by the word of his (God's) power (1:3). That he was in the beginning is implied (1:10), and that the heavens and earth are transitory while he is unchanging and eternal is stated in 1:11, 12. In 2:11 it is implied that even in this preincarnate state he bore some special relation to men which ("for which reason," 2:11) constituted them, or at least led him to call them, brethren. And just because these brethren had their lot in flesh and blood he, too, partook of the same. But the reason for this was that it was necessary in order to do for them that which he wanted to do or felt obliged to do just because, in his preincarnate state, there already existed a bond between them, since both sanctifier and sanctified were all of one (2:11) (as we might say, "all of a piece"). It is hardly satisfactory to the context and the general thought of the writer to take this, as most interpreters do, to denote that they have a common origin in God; for God, in the thought of the writer, is the common origin of all things (2:10)—angels, demons, men, and worlds. It is more likely that the phrase means "of a piece," for this harmonizes better both with the preceding and the following verses. The sanctifier and sanctified are all "of a piece," i.e., both the captain of salvation and the "sons" belong to the same company: they form a unit. The captain is not a foreign ruler imposed upon the company, but is one with them. And the three citations which follow (vs. 11) emphasize this same thought, viz., the community and identity of the captain with his company. If it be said that this community or identity is presented rather as holding good in the preincarnate state, even before being realized in the earthly period, it is perhaps best explained as being

carried back in thought from the earthly period and applied to the preincarnate period though it does not strictly belong there. This is not an unusual thing in our writer. If it is still felt that this is not enough to account for the ascription of relationship in the preincarnate state, that relationship should be found in something more special than simply a common, otherwise undefined, origin from God. It might consist of the special relationship of "sons" (2:10), which is such as to exclude having anything to do with angels or other beings. It might hint at the common pre-existence of all souls.

It is unnecessary to present again the material which is found in the writer concerning Jesus during the earthly period spoken of as "the days of his flesh." This has already been fully presented under the headings of the writer's knowledge of the historical Jesus and human elements in harmony with this knowledge.

It remains to present the material coming under the third, the heavenly or exalted, state of Jesus. There is considerable vagueness with regard to the initial stages of this postincarnate period. The line between the postincarnate period and the earthly period is not clearly marked, there being a number of events that belong to both. There is, so to speak, a vestibule or entrance to the postincarnate period proper. To this vestibule belongs the great sacrificial act—the voluntary death (7:27); also the resurrection (13:20) and the ascension of Jesus (4:14), though the writer does not give a detailed description of them. Of the ascension, it is not certain that the author had such a conception as that which the writer of Acts gives, though the phrase "passed through the heavens" might naturally correspond (cf. 4:14; 9:24). Following this is the exaltation, which ushers in the postincarnate period. It is spoken of as an anointing (1:9), as being crowned with glory and honor (2:9), as sitting down at the right hand of God (1:13; 10:12).

This is a solemn inauguration into the state which the writer considers supreme in Jesus' career, the state of exaltation. It is the period in which Jesus exercises his real and efficient ministry. It is the important period for which the preceding period was but preparation. Positive activities are assigned to Jesus in the preincarnate period, viz., the creation of the world and the sustaining of it. And in the incarnate period he is spoken of as being the first to proclaim the salvation (2:3). But the emphasis on his activity in these periods is exceedingly slight. His real activity is in the postincarnate period. In this period he receives his inheritance (1:2). It is difficult to say whether the words "the effulgence of his glory and the very image of his substance" apply

only to the preincarnate and postincarnate periods or cover his whole career. It is in this period of exaltation that his death is efficacious in delivering his followers from the fear of death (2:14, 15) and in their sanctification (10:10, 14). Though the author is indefinite as to the time of Jesus' becoming High Priest, it is in this period, clearly, that he considers him as fully exercising his High-Priestly office (6:20; 7:28; 8:1–3; 10:21) on behalf of men before God (9:24), in securing the forgiveness of sins committed under the old covenant (9:15), the cleansing of the conscience from dead works (9:14), and full and free access to God (4:16; 10:19). It is through his High-Priestly activity in this period that he brings to bear those qualities and capacities gained in the experiences of the earthly life by delivering from temptation (2:18), laying hold of men to help them (2:16), making propitiation for the sins of the people (2:17), and in being merciful and faithful (2:17; 3:1). In short, he is now the cause of eternal salvation to those who obey him (5:9) and is so continually and completely because he is now exercising as High Priest the power of an endless life (7:16, 24). To this period pre-eminently applies the statement that he, Jesus Christ, is the same yesterday, today, and forever (13:8). He is the mediator and sponsor of a better covenant (7:22; 12:24), the Apostle and High Priest of our confession (3:1), to whom believers must look as the supreme example and the author and perfecter of faith (12:2).

It is during this period that Jesus waits (10:13) until his enemies be made the footstool of his feet (1:13). Just what is implied in this the writer does not say. But he evidently holds to a division of this period of exaltation by a definite time at which Jesus shall come again (9:28). At this time all enemies shall have been subjected to him. With this time shall come the judgment, though this judgment is ascribed to God —not to Jesus (4:13*b*; 6:7, 8; 10:30; 12:23, 25, 26, 29; 13:4). With it shall come what in our writer corresponds to the new heavens and the new earth of Paul, the shaking of the things that are superficial and transitory and the bringing in of the kingdom that cannot be shaken, the kingdom of abiding realities which belongs to believers (12:27). This is the ushering in of the full fruition of faith (11:39), the realization of the full salvation (9:28), the perfect rest of God long deferred (4:9). Though little is said as to Jesus' position in this new world of perfect and abiding reality, it would appear that the best interpretation of 2:5 would make it subject to Jesus as heir of all things under God (1:2). This second part of the postincarnate period is conceived of as the final and eternal realization of the good things brought through Jesus (9:11; 10:1),

of the completed house of God over which Jesus presides (3:6). It is the better thing of 11:39, viz., the united realization, on the part of all believers past and present, of the promise of God, not granted to the heroes of the old covenant in spite of their faithfulness, that all might enjoy it together.

These three periods, preincarnate, incarnate, and postincarnate, constitute the career of Jesus, the latter period being divided by the second coming to inaugurate the kingdom which cannot be shaken. These are not progressive stages, though they are clearly stages in the career of one and the same person. It is remarkable how little is said that applies to the preincarnate stage. Yet what little is said is of such a high tenor that it forbids the conception that in his real character and nature this person experienced a continuous development from lower to higher or from imperfect to perfect. The writer, indeed, dwells much on the "perfecting" of Jesus through sufferings but this does not involve continuous progression through three periods. One who was the Son of God, through whom he made the worlds and probably the supporter of those worlds, the effulgence of God's glory and impress of his substance in the preincarnate state, could not be conceived of as progressing through these three stages. Moreover, the earthly career of Jesus would render impossible such a conception. Such an exalted preincarnate condition, even though comparatively little is said about it, would compel the author to present the earthly period as one of humiliation.

But the case is quite different when considered from the point of view of Jesus' office and work, the preparation for it and the glory attending it. Here it would seem that the author wishes to give us the picture of progression. The earthly stage of his career is a humiliation to be sure, a diminishing in dignity as compared with the angels (2:9), but it is only for a short time and for a glorious purpose, viz., the bringing of many sons into glory. For this reason he too shared in flesh and blood as the rest of these sons. For this reason also it was eminently fitting that God should perfect him through suffering, that is, perfect him for the fulfilment of this high and glorious task. And it is the accomplishment of this high task in its full perfection that is the joy set before him (12:2), the gladness that he enjoys beyond his fellows (1:9). This is the kingdom which he inherits (1:2) as the permanent representative of God, for the author of Hebrews has no statement of Jesus' giving up the kingdom to God such as characterizes Paul's view.

There is, therefore, a progress through these three stages, but it is in the career of Jesus rather than in his character and person. It is

true, however, that the experiences necessary to the fulfilment of his vocation reacted upon his character, calling forth and developing such genuinely human qualities as faith, fidelity, compassion, fair dealing (5:2), reverence (5:7), obedience (5:8), patient endurance (12:3), all of which, though viewed by the writer as qualities essential to the successful carrying out of his vocation, must at the same time have been viewed by him as noble human qualities as well.

II. CHRIST AS SUPERIOR TO THE ANGELS AND MOSES

In seeking to show the transcendent elements which enter into the character and nature of this person it will be well to begin with his superiority to the angels. This the writer emphasizes strongly and with considerable detail. The suddenness with which the writer descends from the beautiful and exalted language and thought of the first three verses of the first chapter, which form an imposing vestibule to a noble edifice, to the apparently insipid statement of vs. 4, "having become by so much better than the angels as he has inherited a more excellent name than they," is at first disappointing; but such a feeling and attitude is modern, betraying a failure to enter into the thought, view, and situation of the writer. It is not even necessary to say with Bruce that the writer here, in true apologetic fashion, is accommodating himself to the peculiar views of the readers who made much of angels and considered Jesus an angel. There is no evidence from the epistle that the writer considered his readers to hold heretical views or even exaggerated views concerning the angels. He depreciates the dignity and work of the angels only in contrast with the superior dignity and work of Christ.

This is perfectly natural and reasonable when we consider what a prominent part angels played in the ancient religious economy. It is evident that in various ways the author himself shared these views concerning the high office of angels. He speaks of entertaining strangers as possibly entertaining angels unawares (13:12); he speaks of "myriads" of angels, even a festal assembly and convocation of firstborn who are enrolled in heaven.[1] Of itself this reveals a high conception of angels on the part of the writer. He speaks of the specific and ordinary function of angels as being that of ministering spirits sent forth to minister on behalf of those who shall be heirs of salvation (1:14). But it is not of angels that Jesus lays hold to help (2:15), nor is the world to come, the future kingdom of abiding reality, to be subjected to angels (2:5). The reason for his making this latter statement is, doubtless, the idea con-

[1] Cf. Peake, *Hebrews*, *ad. loc.*, p. 233.

tained in the phrase "the word spoken through the angels proved steadfast" (2:2). The writer evidently has the conception, more clearly expressed by Paul and common to the primitive Christians, that the old covenant, with its law and promises and warnings, was mediated through angels.

This, then, is the conception that causes and justifies the extended contrast between Christ and the angels which is put prominently first in the epistle (1:5–14). If the word of the old covenant spoken through angels was steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense, they surely cannot expect to escape who neglect a word that is spoken through the Lord who is so superior in dignity and person to the angels. The degree of this superiority is expressed in 1:4, "having become by so much better than the angels as he has inherited a more excellent name than they." The word translated "better" is indefinite; it means "superior" without denoting in what the superiority consists. There is no reference in the word to moral worth or character. Clement of Rome (*Ad Cor.* 1:36) was probably unconsciously influenced by the true shade of meaning here when, in quoting this passage, he substituted the word μείζων for κρείττων, i.e., "greater," "superior" in point of dignity and rank, since he is seated on the right hand of the majesty on high.

But the reason for this high place in dignity and rank above the angels is, that he has inherited a more excellent name than they. Earlier interpreters took this word "name" in the general sense so frequent in Scripture, as denoting "dignity," "glory," "fame" (cf. Phil. 2:9). Modern interpreters, however, largely agree in understanding the author to have in mind the specific name "Son." This seems at first natural, as the next two verses contain the name "Son" and are closely connected with the preceding by the word "for": "For to what one of the angels did he ever say, Thou art my Son, I today have begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father and he shall be to me a Son." But vs. 6 continues the thought of the high dignity of Christ without any reference to the specific name "Son." Moreover, the rest of the quotations in this chapter have no reference to the specific name "Son." It seems better therefore to hold to the older interpretation. The word "name" denotes the higher dignity, rank, worth, and fame of Christ. This is shown from Old Testament Scripture in vss. 5 and 6 by the fact that the intimate relation denoted by the word "son" exists between him and God, a term which Scripture has never used of any one of the angels; also by the fact that when Christ comes a second time into the world

all the angels of God are to worship him. Vss. 7–12 show the superiority of Christ over the angels in that while they are changeable forms of being that pass into the forces of Nature at the will of God, Christ is not like the angels, subject to such change into the elements, for under God (1:2), he himself made the world, the heavens, and the forces of Nature; and thus, though they change, he changes not but abides the same eternally. Moreover, God never called any angel to share with him his throne (1:13) and with it universal dominion. Thus Christ is superior to the angels in that he enjoys the intimate relationship of Son to God, eternal dignity and worth which are superior to world-changes, and finally, royal rank in sharing with God his throne and promised universal dominion.

More obvious to us is the effort of the author to show the superiority of Christ over Moses. Even today we appreciate the exalted part which Moses played in connection with the establishment of the old covenant, though we scarcely accord him the great glory with which not only the Jews, but also the devout gentiles of antiquity, encircled his name. His name was prominent among the Jews. And the author of Hebrews does not by any means intend to depreciate his glory. He considers him the great apostle—perhaps also priest—of the old covenant, the mediator between God and his people. In 11:23 ff. he describes him among the other heroes of faith with exceptionally vivid touches; he speaks of him as choosing the reproach of the Christ, by which phrase he designates the sufferings both of the Old Testament and the New Testament people of God (11:26). Moses is the great example of faith under the old covenant as Jesus himself is under the new (12:2). The commands of the old covenant he calls the "law of Moses" (10:28), a law that was strictly and terribly enforced. Moses was the great leader of the people from Egypt (4:16) and the one who was directed by God and intrusted with the task of making the tabernacle according to the pattern revealed to him in the Mount (8:5).

The writer, therefore, holds the high opinion of the place of Moses peculiar to his people. He is careful not to offend his readers in his discussion of the superiority of Jesus. For in 3:1–6 he begins by placing them on a par in the quality of faithfulness which both Moses and Jesus manifested in their respective missions. This was a quality displayed in the fulfilment of their official tasks. But in the nature and glory of his person and position Jesus is far superior to Moses. He is as superior in glory as the builder of a house is superior in glory to the house itself. The word "house" is not used here only in the limited sense of a

"building" but in the fuller sense of the "household." In fact it is used in a still larger sense as denoting that over which anyone has control or jurisdiction, as a king's people or kingdom was spoken of as his "house." The three meanings of "building," "household," and "people" or "kingdom" are here involved.[1]

The most natural and consistent interpretation of this seems to be that Moses, great though he was, was himself only a part of God's house, a servant in the house, one of the people, while Jesus is the one who established this house and is over it. A house must be built or established by someone: it does not grow of itself. And the one who established God's house was Jesus. He is therein far superior to Moses who was himself only a member of the household. The thought here seems to be somewhat different from that in 2:11 where Christ is closely associated as one with those who are sanctified. But the two thoughts while contrasted are not contradictory. In 3:3 the thought is, perhaps, hardly to be pressed so far as to imply that Christ is conceived by the writer as the actual author of the dispensation of the old covenant, though this would not be out of accord with the writer's general point of view which considers Christ as the representative of God in all things. The thought that God is back of all that Christ does would then be emphasized and guarded by 3:4*b* which is careful to make God the ultimate source of all things (cf. Ps. 127:1*a*). It is, however, unlikely that the author is here thinking of the preincarnate Christ as the builder of the Old Testament portion of the house; rather, he is thinking of God's house as one and Christ its builder without distinguishing sharply between old and new. Again, Jesus is superior in position and person in relation to this house, for while Moses was but a servant, Jesus was Son over God's house. This unique relation denoted by Son must be left for further consideration.

The author considers Jesus, by virtue of his dignity as Son, superior to all the prophets of the Old Testament dispensation. This superiority is set forth concisely and yet decisively in the first two verses of the epistle. In all these comparisons it has been noted that Christ is superior because of his superior dignity and position and this superior dignity and position is expressed though not defined in the word Son.

It may not be amiss to call attention to the fact here that, though no comparison is openly expressed, a comparison is implied between Christ on the one hand and Moses and Joshua on the other, in that while they both failed to lead the people of the old covenant into the promised rest

[1] Cf. Philo, *De plantat. Noe*, sec. 16, p. 224*A*.

of God (3:16; 4:8), Christ is the one who succeeds in doing so. The comparison, however, is not so decisive, since the emphasis is rather upon the failure through the disobedience and unbelief of the people themselves than upon the failure or success of their leaders.

III. CHRIST SUPERIOR AS HIGH PRIEST AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK

We reach the heart of the epistle when we come to consider the main thesis of the writer, that Jesus is superior to the priests and more especially to the High Priest of the old covenant. This is the main constructive portion of the epistle (4:14—10:18). It shows the superiority of Christ as High Priest after the order of Melchizedek and will naturally include consideration of him as Mediator of a new covenant, as sinless, and as Author of eternal salvation.

1. CHRIST THE MEDIATOR OF A BETTER COVENANT

That Jesus as High Priest of the new covenant is superior to Aaron and the Levitical priests of the old is the great thesis of the epistle. That Jesus is presented as High Priest is almost a unique thesis in the New Testament. Paul hints at the thought when he says that Christ Jesus makes intercession at the right hand of God for us (Rom. 8:34*b*), but he does not develop the idea. The Book of Revelation has the thought of believers as being priests unto God, but not of Christ as Priest or High Priest. In Hebrews the thesis is worked out with a fulness of detail and richness of moral and spiritual truth that is remarkable. It is altogether probable that the emphasis and detail are due to the influence either of Alexandrianism or of the mystery-religions or of both. It seems clear from the epistle itself (4:14) that the general thesis formed part of the contents of what was regarded as a regular confession which Christian converts made and which the readers, under the stress of opposition and persecution, were in danger of breaking.

The writer, however, has seized upon this thesis of Jesus as High Priest of a new covenant and has constructed his whole theology and Christian teaching about it. He has attempted to express the whole significance of Jesus through it. In the Old Testament, he thinks chiefly of the ministry of the High Priest on the great Day of Atonement. That whole system, he says, God-given though it was, was only typical. Its priesthood, its ministry, and its law were imperfect. They failed to clear the consciences of men from the sense and burden of sins. From the Old Testament story of Genesis, helped by touches from Philo of Alexandria, he sets forth the superiority of Jesus as High Priest under

the strange, weird figure of Melchizedek. Melchizedek is king of righteousness and king of peace: so is Jesus. He is superior to the patriarch Abraham and therefore also to the sons of Levi in that he, the greater, gave to Abraham his priestly blessing. Abraham, on the other hand, gave to Melchizedek a tenth of the spoils he had taken from the kings. The Levites were mortal men but, arguing like Philo from the silence of Scripture, Melchizedek's priesthood had no beginning and no end; so too with Christ. On account of the fact that he abides forever Christ has an unchangeable priesthood, a priesthood that does not pass from him to another. They were appointed priests according to the law of a carnal commandment, i.e., according to a law of physical descent which could only be a temporary arrangement: Jesus was appointed priest according to the power of an indissoluble life, i.e., a life of such high moral and spiritual quality that it cannot be broken by death and therefore insures a permanent priesthood. And it is this that sums up his superiority as High Priest of the new covenant. To be sure, he is superior in other respects. He is appointed by oath of God; he presents a better offering, himself; he ministers in the true tabernacle, in heaven itself, in the very presence of God (8:2) whither he has entered, having passed through the intermediate heavens (4:14), as forerunner (4:16; 6:20).

But the reiterated expression that reveals his superiority over the Levitical high priests is that he is called by God (5:5) High Priest according to the order or rank of Melchizedek, who was himself superior to the Levitical priests in that being without father, without mother, without genealogy as priest, he is made like the Son of God and abideth a priest forever. It is the person of Jesus as Son of God and the fact that being such he abides a priest forever that constitutes his superiority over the Levitical priests. There is probably no thought of distinction in the writer's mind between Christ as Priest and as High Priest. It is probably not necessary here to go farther into the perplexities of chap. 7 which deals with Melchizedek as a type of Christ. There is in it a strongly Philonian coloring. The gist of it for our purpose is plain, viz., to show how great this strange figure of Melchizedek was as it darted across the pathway of Old Testament history, suddenly rising and as suddenly disappearing. It had the halo of eternity about it and shadowed forth a new and better priesthood. The statement of Scripture (Ps. 110:4) that the Messiah was called by God High Priest after the order of Melchizedek gives the proof-text he wishes and furnishes the writer solid ground for transferring this superiority of Melchizedek to Jesus.

It is especially plain in this case that while appearing to work from Melchizedek as type toward Christ, the author is really working from Jesus back to Melchizedek and seeing in Melchizedek largely what he needs to see in order to express his confidence in the supremacy of Jesus. It is a typical piece of Alexandrian exegesis.

While this figure of Melchizedek suggests the main points in which the superiority of Jesus consists, viz., his Sonship to God and his permanency as priest, there are other points of superiority to the Levitical priests which it does not touch. Jesus is superior to the Levitical priests in that he is also the mediator (8:6; 9:15) and sponsor (7:22), or surety by his death (9:15), for a better covenant established upon better promises and having a more excellent ministry. The reason given in this passage (7:20 ff.) for the superiority of the covenant is the fact that this new covenant is mediated and guaranteed by a priest who was appointed by oath of God. But the new covenant or law is superior in itself also because under it the end of religion, viz., the full forgiveness of sins, is finally and forever secured (10:16–18). The new law is better also because it is inward and personal. With keen insight he seizes upon the passage in Jer. 31:31 ff. that speaks of a new dispensation in which religion shall be inward and personal, whereby he finds in the Old Testament itself, as he did in the case of Melchizedek (Ps. 110:4), support for his thesis that there is to be a new and better covenant written not on tables of stone but on fleshly tables of the heart and mind. But it is interesting to note how carefully the writer subordinates the covenant or law to the priesthood. With him it is axiomatic that a change of priesthood automatically necessitates a change of law. This appears in 7:11–19. He has already shown that according to Scripture (Ps. 110:4) Melchizedek prefigures a new and different priesthood. That means a new law (vs. 12), because Jesus, being of the tribe of Judah, is, like Melchizedek, of a different order. That the old law should be a failure (vss. 11, 18), that Melchizedek should picture a different and higher priesthood, that Jesus should actually come from the tribe of Judah—all these harmonize with and confirm one another and unite in making clearer (vs. 15) the main point of the whole section, viz., that the Levitical priesthood and the old law have both failed in accomplishing the essential and ultimate end of religion and therefore have given place to a new priesthood and a new law. This new and better covenant he identifies with the full and final word of revelation given by God in his Son (1:2) and spoken first by the Lord himself (2:3). But the efficient virtue of this new law or covenant rests ultimately upon the

personnel of the priesthood, that is, upon the personal worth and character of Jesus who is at once mediator, surety, and priest of this new and better covenant.) As Moses and the angels were mediators of the old, so Jesus is mediator of the new, and is as far superior to them as the new is superior to the old. It may be that here again the author implicitly considers Moses priest as well as prophet, thus making the parallel with Jesus as High Priest more complete.

2. SINLESSNESS OF JESUS

Another part of Jesus' superiority as High Priest is indicated in the characterization "holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and made higher than the heavens" (7:26). The latter phrase denotes his superior glory as having entered into the true tabernacle, the innermost heaven which is the abode of the full presence of God. But in the rest of the terms applied to Jesus as High Priest in this passage, we have a statement of his perfect purity and sinlessness. Closely connected with this is the statement of 7:28 that the law appointeth men high priests who have weakness, while the word of the oath of God appoints a Son perfected forevermore, i.e., without weakness. It is not contradictory to this that the writer in another place (5:1–3), while giving the necessary qualities of every high priest, says that he is girt (or encompassed) with weakness. This must not be pressed so as to apply to Jesus as High Priest in his exalted state. In this same passage the author also says that the High Priest must make offering not for the people only but also for himself. This certainly the author does not mean to apply to Jesus as High Priest, for he distinctly says that he had no need to make offering for himself. It is probable that during the earthly existence he considers Christ as encompassed with weakness, while in his exaltation, where he is considered as pre-eminently High Priest, he is perfected and therefore completely free from weakness. Of the rest of the terms of 7:26 "holy" is used of relationship to God, "guileless" of the personal character, and "undefiled" of freedom from ceremonial contamination from the outside. The phrase "separated from sinners" lies midway between the preceding and following phrases. It suggests, on the one hand, the seven-days' separation of the high-priest before the great Day of Atonement in order to avoid ceremonial contamination and, on the other, it finds its complement in the phrase "made higher than the heavens," which denotes the place of supreme honor and dignity in the ineffable presence of God. The whole passage carries the atmosphere of the mystery-religions and emphasizes the

perfect ceremonial and personal purity of the High Priest Jesus in his official capacity both before God and before men. The most striking passage on this topic, however, refers to the period of preparation for his High-Priestly office, the earthly period of temptation. In 4:15 it is said of him that he was "tempted in all things in like manner [with us] without sin." Here the sinlessness of Jesus is more specifically stated but it is spoken of as an achievement, a concrete thing rather than an abstract, absolute thing, a positive thing rather than a negative thing. For the meaning of the author here evidently is, that Christ has the quality of sympathy because he has actually been tempted in all things (i.e., exactly in the same way) as we are tempted. But he was victorious in all his temptations and therefore sinless. This sinlessness was an acquirement rather than an endowment.

3. JESUS AS AUTHOR OF ETERNAL SALVATION

There is still another phase of his High-Priestly work which, in the presentation of the writer, sets forth the exalted superiority of Jesus. It may be summed up in the characteristic phrase of the writer that Jesus is the cause or author of eternal salvation (5:9). This salvation is conceived by the author as primarily future (9:28). The whole epistle is written upon the view that the realization of their hopes lies in the future, in that time when Christ shall come again and usher in that rest of God which God has been waiting to share with his people since the finishing of creation (4:8 ff.). Then all enemies shall have been subdued beneath his feet and for his followers anticipation shall have passed into realization. Meanwhile they must hope, believe, endure, struggle, and hold fast their confession, since he is faithful that promised (6:12; 6:13 ff.; 10:23), and their time for waiting is not long (10:37)—the ancient heroes have had to wait much longer (11:40). But this feature of the author's presentation may easily be overemphasized at the expense of the elements of salvation that are realized during the earthly career of the believer. It is an error easy to make if one holds the author of Hebrews strictly to his somewhat fantastic intellectual scheme of things. But one must recognize that such a writer breaks through his own framework. The old bottles will not hold the new wine. There are many clear indications that while the picture the writer presents is that of persons waiting sick at heart for the fulfilment of a promise that seems to fail them, like watchmen in the night waiting for the day that never seems to dawn, as a matter of fact the blessings of that day of realization are continually breaking in upon the darkness of their faith. Realization

is not wholly in the future. This will appear more fully after presenting the writer's conception of eternal salvation.

As already noted, the writer says that Jesus himself began the proclamation of this great salvation (2:3). The word of this higher revelation was a word of salvation in contrast with the word of the old dispensation. The mediators of the old were Moses and the angels, but the mediator of the new was a Son, Jesus. Therefore is this salvation so great as to be final and authoritative. The writer does not here reveal precisely in what he considered this salvation first proclaimed by the Lord to consist. The words of 2:4 exhibit the condition of the early Christian church with considerable verisimilitude when compared with the introductory chapters of Acts. It is likely that the writer considered himself to be in essential harmony with the primitive church in his conception of this salvation. It consisted of the proclamation that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, that his death, resurrection, and exaltation at God's right hand brought the boon of the forgiveness of sins through him. The promise of his return to inaugurate the kingdom of God and restore all things was added. The author was probably not conscious to himself of having advanced upon this primitive message or of having altered it in any way. He cast the common message into his own peculiar intellectual mold for the purpose of interpretation, exhortation, and enforcement. But to be more certain of his conception it is necessary to go to his own full and characteristic elucidation of this eternal salvation.

To begin with, the great lines on which he constructs his framework, viz., covenant, priesthood, sacrifice, etc., demand and secure a unique and supreme emphasis upon the death of Jesus. The purpose of his humiliation in comparison with the angels, and of his sharing in flesh and blood like his brethren, was just that he might undergo the experience of death on their behalf (2:14, possibly 2:9), thus delivering them from the fear of death. How Jesus' death could accomplish this the writer shows more clearly in 10:5 ff., where he states that Jesus' death is a sacrifice cheerfully undertaken by him in accordance with the will of God because of the evident ineffectiveness of the sacrifices under the old covenant (10:1–4). "Ineffectiveness" is perhaps too mild a word to use, as the author seems to mingle with his statements here a slight touch of quiet scorn. But the death of Jesus is by no means ineffective. It is the one final sacrifice of the superior new covenant, while those of the old covenant were many and continually repeated. It is emphasized in various solemn and emphatic words (9:26; 10:12). It is the sacrifice of himself, a strikingly new thing (9:14), an offering that is faultless

(9:14). Since his death is sacrificial, it secures the forgiveness of sins fully and finally—at least to those who add on their part all diligence (10:18). How precisely it does this or could do this the writer does not attempt to say simply because neither he nor his readers had any thought of going behind the cardinal conception of their day, viz., that without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins (9:22). This death of Jesus in its relation to sins is probably conceived as timeless. At least it is retroactive in its efficacy, opening up the promised eternal inheritance by the removing of the sins committed under the old covenant (9:15). It is probable also that the writer conceives the virtue of this sacrificial death of Jesus to extend to sins of the future as of the past, though he says nothing definitely about it. It is true that he has a strange reservation in regard to wilful sins, but it is hardly fair to his presentation to maintain as some have done that it has no provision for any sins committed after enlightenment or conversion, and that from this arises his stern and somber view of God as the consuming fire and terrible judge. Without minimizing the latter fact, it is however more likely that he conceived the sacrificial death of Jesus as timeless in its efficacy availing for sins past, present, and future. And it must further be said that the writer does not conceive of this purification of sins made by the sacrificial death of Jesus (1:3) as an external, mechanical, forensic thing. It does not in the least degree release the believer from the intense exercise of all the virtues of the Christian life. It is not a mere ceremonial thing like the old sacrifices (9:13), but reaches to the inmost being, cleansing the conscience from dead works to serve a living God (9:14). It purifies and sanctifies (9:23; 10:2; 10:10; 13:12). Doubtless these words originally and generally in Scripture, and in this epistle, have a static, aoristic sense; but historic development, the general atmosphere of the epistle, and in particular such a passage as 12:10, indicate that in addition they possess in Hebrews a strong ethical and spiritual coloring. Entrance by faith into the true holy place of God's real presence is gained through this sacrificial death of Jesus (10:19, 20). We must not minimize the moral and spiritual strength of this thought simply because God is conceived as inhabiting a local dwelling-place. If to the sacrificial death of Jesus we add its sequel, the resurrection and exaltation, we shall arrive at the full import of the phrase "eternal salvation" as the end of the High-Priesthood of Jesus. The word "eternal," as used in this epistle, is qualitative as well as temporal in its content. It implies a bringing into full covenant relation with God so that there shall be harmony and free, glad intercourse, that the people shall be God's

people and God shall be their God (8:10). And though the idea of a covenant people is always prominent with this writer he, of course, thinks also of the individual and his relation to God. Jesus as exalted High Priest is able to save completely, that is, not only eternally but perfectly, those who come unto God through him (7:25). And this complete salvation finds its perfection in that full realization of the covenant relation which is described as the eternal inheritance (9:15), the *sabbatismos* of the people of God. This, however, is to be realized only at the second coming of Christ when a new order shall prevail and the world of eternal and spiritual realities shall be fully revealed.

In the view of the epistle, then, the whole of this imposing structure rests upon the one central essential point of Jesus' sacrificial death as the necessary death of the testator of the new covenant (9:16). The writer was not at all concerned to question the logical or theological necessity of this death, nor to wonder how such virtue could reasonably and consistently be attached to it. That is a modern question. With the writer the necessity was wholly religious and practical; in this, as in many other features of the epistle, we have evidence that not philosophy or theory but experience is fundamental. If, however, the author were asked the question he would reply, as indeed he actually does declare in the epistle, that the reason Jesus' death does have such large results religiously and ethically is that it is the death of one who is appointed of God to be High Priest after the order of Melchizedek—that is, one whose personal inner nature, worth, and position as Son of God were such that his death could have these results (5:5, 6). He was the spotless High Priest (9:14) who needed not to make any offering for himself but offered himself through eternal spirit to God (9:14). This latter probably means that while the sacrifices of the old covenant were only fleshly or physical (9:13), performed by a priest appointed by physical descent (7:16), Jesus' sacrifice moved in the realm of the spiritual, was voluntary, perfect, and therefore eternal (7:16), and spiritual in its effects. In a word, the significance of Jesus' death in the thought of the writer depends directly upon the nature and worth of his person. By his entrance into the heavenly and true holy place and his unchangeable priesthood (7:24), upon the basis of his sacrificial death, he has secured the forgiveness of sins, the continued sanctification and ultimate perfection of his people. It is true, of course, that what really fills the writer's vision and constitutes the sum of his thought is the continued activity of Jesus as exalted High Priest. The actual death is but one event, yet it is original and fundamental.

Although the author uses the framework of the old covenant as the vehicle of his thought, he clearly has no superficial, merely ceremonial conception of sin and salvation. He has the original ceremonial meaning of the terms "holiness," "sanctification," "purification," and "perfection," yet it is evident from the general tone of the writing that these words carry a weight which their original meanings will not bear. In a large degree religion has become ethical, so that there is a deeply moral and religious meaning in these terms and in the whole content of the salvation provided by the new covenant. This is expressed in the writer's scheme by saying that the old covenant is merely type while the new is the reality, the old is shadow while the new is substance. But the writer in many other ways reveals the strongly ethical tone of his system. He insists continually, sternly, almost monotonously upon the absolute necessity of perseverance and obedience. With him unbelief is equivalent to disobedience (cf. 3:12 with 4:6). Even Jesus himself learned obedience through that which he suffered (5:8). The perfect among believers are those, who, by reason of use or habit, have their senses trained to distinguish between good and bad (5:14). The thought as well as the words here reveal a strain of the Stoic philosopher with his emphasis on morals. This obedience, indeed, is to a new law (7:12; 8:6)—a law that is inward, personal, and universal (8:10 ff.). And the high character of this obedience is shown very clearly in the Doxology (13:20). It is pursuing of the good in accordance with the will of God as Jesus himself did (10:5). It is not a merely human and natural pursuit but is aided by the inspiration of the leadership and example of Jesus (12:2), by the impartation of the Holy Spirit (6:4), and by the whole High-Priestly activity and sympathy of Jesus (2:18; 5:9). This obedience avoids the legalism of Pharisaic Judaism on the one hand and the mystical element of Paulinism on the other. It is more lofty than the one and more humble than the other.

It is held by many[1] that the eternal salvation thus gained is an entirely future thing. This again, is putting a greater burden on the writer's philosophical world-view than it should be expected to bear. Even if it be true (which can hardly be granted) that the word "salvation" whenever used always refers to the perfected believer in the future perfect state, the consummated rest of God, it would still not necessarily follow that nothing of what we today call salvation was realized by the believers of the epistle during their earthly life. It depends on how much we include in the writer's term "salvation." We may, if we wish, force

[1] Scott, *Apologetic of the New Testament*, p. 202; McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*, p. 473.

the word into the narrow limits of the perfected final state. But there still remains much in the epistle which Jesus does for believers during their earthly life. It is unnatural to interpret otherwise such passages as 2:10; 2:14–18; 4:16; 7:25; 12:28, and especially 13:20, 21. The context and the present tenses used, demand a reference to present benefits. Whether these benefits are included by the writer in his word "salvation" or not is, in any case, largely a matter of words not of reality. The benefits are clearly such as are necessary to the realization of the covenant relation, viz., the relation of harmony and communion with God. It is much more natural, therefore, to say that by the term "salvation," the writer denotes all the benefits received under the inspiration or by the help of Jesus, which benefits are necessary to the realization of the new covenant relation, viz., entrance into and full enjoyment of the presence of God. This is partially realized before, and fully realized only after, the parousia of Christ (9:28). Delitzsch's words on 7:25 are pertinent here:

> This all-embracing salvation is vouchsafed to those who through him approach to God, that is, those who in faith make use of the way of access which he has opened, and which remains open to him; nay more, this very access to free and joyous communion with God, made by the removal of the barrier of sin, is in itself the all-including commencement of that perfect "salvation."

Thus the author of the Hebrews emphasizes the future and passes lightly over the present, while we emphasize the present and pass lightly over the future. The important thing to notice here is that this salvation whether in its partial realization in the present or in its completed realization in the future is mediated through Jesus and is what it is because of what he is and does. He is the cause of this eternal salvation, being himself eternal.

IV. CHRIST AS ETERNAL

1. COSMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST

It will be well to consider first the writer's conception of the cosmic significance of Christ. It is through him that God has made the ages, that is, the world (1:2). This great thought, distinct though it is, is neither emphasized nor amplified in the epistle. Elsewhere the writer attributes the work of creation directly to God as both the final and efficient cause (2:10). In another passage this work is attributed to the word of God (11:3). This contrast is not to be interpreted as a contradiction within the thought of the writer. It is rather to be considered as another of many indications in the epistle (cf. 3:4*b*) that

God is supreme in the writer's thought. This thought of Christ as agent of creation under God is more emphatic in the Fourth Gospel (1:2, 3) and in Colossians (1:16) than in Hebrews. It is pre-Gnostic and with the author of Hebrews probably Philonian in origin. Its importance here is that it expresses the author's belief in the pre-incarnate activity of Christ.

But not only did God make the world through Christ; he also made him heir of all things (1:2). The same thought is to be inferred from 2:8, 9 and from 1:13. But while these passages indicate something received as an inheritance, something occurring progressively in time, the middle portion of 1:3 indicates an activity at least coextensive with the universe itself, since the Son bears all things by the word of God's power. Here again the clearness with which this cosmic activity of the Son is subordinated to that of God is noteworthy as compared with a closely parallel passage in Colossians (1:17*b*).

But it is in contrast with this cosmic activity of the Son that his eternal significance is first manifested clearly (1:10–12). This is done, indeed, by use of a quotation from Ps. 102 which the author applies directly and confidently to Jesus as Messiah. That the original referred to God himself is of no significance here since the object is the thought of the writer on the topic considered. The earth and the heavens, it is true, are the work of the Christ as Son and Messiah. But they are temporary and fleeting. Like garments they shall become old and threadbare and so shall be changed for new ones (1:11, 12). They shall perish, but the Son abides the same with no aging with the lapse of years (vs. 12*b*). The angels pass at the will of God into winds or flames (1:7), but the Son's throne is forever (1:8). Thus over against the universe which the author, with the common thought of his time, conceives to be fleeting and changeable, the eternity of the Son is set forth.

The eternity of Christ is also emphasized in connection with the eternal salvation which he provides. He is the Son perfected forever (7:28). He is able to save completely since he lives forever (7:25), and thus in contrast with the priests of the old dispensation has a priesthood that does not pass to another (7:24). By his offering through eternal spirit (9:14), he has obtained eternal redemption (9:12*b*), has secured to believers the promise of an eternal inheritance (9:15*b*).

2. RELATION OF CHRIST TO MEN

Of Christ's relation to men in general this epistle has little to say directly, but there are some significant hints. The author thinks of

what we call conversion as occurring at a definite time and speaks of it, as do the mystery-religions, as an enlightenment (6:4) and as becoming partners with Christ (3:14). Although in both of the above passages the danger and possibility of falling away is strongly emphasized, still conversion, in the view of the writer, divides men into two distinct classes. Naturally what the writer has to say regarding Christ's relation to men concerns his relation to believers chiefly. Yet he says that he tasted death for everyone (2:9), that he lays hold not of angels but of the seed of Abraham (2:16). In this latter passage the context shows that the seed of Abraham denotes human nature as such in contrast with the spirit nature of angels. The author does not say seed of Adam, as we might expect, because along with his idea of human nature as such he has strongly in mind here, as everywhere, the thought of salvation, and the inheritors of this salvation are not human beings as such but just the seed of Abraham in the figurative or spiritual sense of the term, the true Israel. The point that is pertinent here, however, is that this language concerning Christ's relation to men implies pre-existence as did also the author's language regarding Christ's relation to the world, his cosmic significance. This thought of pre-existence in relation to men stands out still more clearly in the author's statement as to Christ's relation to Melchizedek (7:3), viz., that Melchizedek was made like to the Son of God in being without father, without mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days, and without end of life. This statement is the more striking as it reverses the thought of the context in which Melchizedek is presented as the type of Christ. Pre-existence is not a necessary inference from this phrase, but it is the natural one in the light of the epistle as a whole. The same thought of pre-existence is clearer in the passage 2:11–14; also more fully in 10:5–10.

In the consideration of Christ as eternal, thus far, it has become plain that the writer holds clearly and emphatically to what might be called the future eternity of Christ. There has been considerable evidence also pointing to his pre-existence. But the writer has not been so clear and emphatic on what may be called the past eternity of Christ. Evidence for the writer's view on this point will fall more naturally under the relation of Christ to God.

3. RELATION OF CHRIST TO GOD

a) Conception of God.—The conception of God found in the Epistle to the Hebrews is a lofty one. There is a somber element in the character of God in Hebrews that does not appear elsewhere in the New Testament

writings. There is but one God. The God of the Old Testament is the God of the New (1:1). There is thus unity in the universe and unity in revelation. But the God of the old dispensation revealed himself in ways more terrible than those of the new (12:18–24). Yet ultimately he is the same terrible God whose gracious (2:9) and persistent (1:1) efforts to reach and save men can be neglected only with terrible peril (12:25–29). Neglect of his supreme revelation in Jesus, his Son, can only bring the greater condemnation (2:3). This thought, to be sure, is one common to New Testament writers, but it is emphasized in Hebrews in a way that is repellent to modern views (6:4–8). It springs from the author's whole conception of life as well as from his conception of God. His view of life as a whole is somber and stern. This element in the writer's conception of God and life many commentators have tried to minimize by forced interpretations of such passages as 6:4–8. But we need to recognize this stern and somber element and accept it as inhering in the writer's view of God and life. It may, indeed, be said that this stern and somber element does not belong to the writer's conception positively but only negatively. It is called forth only by man's carelessness and wicked rejection of light and truth.

This conception is fundamentally the Hebrew conception, touched however with the Greek (Platonic and Philonian) idea of the remoteness of God. God is difficult of access for men and yet access to God is the true ideal, the very thing that in the writer's view constitutes salvation. God spake to the fathers of old in the prophets, but now in a Son, who is become the sole and sufficient mediator and means of true access to God. God is frequently spoken of as the living God (3:12; 9:14; 10:31; 12:22). This expression denotes God as ever living and therefore watchful against wickedness and powerful to punish. It is a terrible thing to fall into his hands. God is judge and vengeance and punishment belong to him (4:12; 10:30). He is a consuming fire (12:29). He is the invisible one whom faith must realize (11:6; 11:27).

But God as judge, avenger, and consuming fire is terrible only to the unrighteous. He is holy, and without holiness no man shall see the Lord (12:14). But he is also the God of his covenant people (9:20) and is not ashamed to be called their God, having prepared for them a city (11:16*b*). He received Abel's gifts, translated Enoch, richly rewarded faithfulness and righteousness in the past, and has provided still better things for his people of the present than for those of the past (11:40). His very chastening is out of love and with the purpose of imparting holiness (12:10). The readers' ministrations to the saints are reckoned

as done to himself and will not be forgotten (6:10). Their services and sacrifices are well-pleasing to him (13:16). In the general sense God is father of all spirits (12:9) but he is specially gracious to his covenant people.

In relation to the universe God is its creator. This primary postulate is given to us by faith (11:3). The meaning of this verse is much-disputed, but the natural interpretation is gained by falling back upon the Philonian views of the writer. The reference then, in μὴ ἐκ φαινομένων, is not to primitive chaotic matter, the ὕλη of Plato and the Greek philosophers in general, but to the archetypal ideas which in creation are embodied in visible form. That this is not doing violence to the writer can be seen from a comparison with 8:5. Creation is the divine act analogous to the task assigned to Moses in the making of the tabernacle. Creation is directly attributed to God in another phrase which is frequent in Plato and Philo; God is the final and efficient cause of all things (2:10). In a miniature parable (6:7, 8) God is represented as blessing or rejecting the earth according as it is either fertile or barren for men.

Indeed, God is over all and back of all and in all. The works of power in the Apostolic age were according to his will (2:4). He it is who is bringing many sons to glory (2:10). He is the God of peace who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead (13:20). The movements of Nature are the expression of his will. His voice shook the earth at Sinai and his voice shall shake both earth and heaven at the great metathesis when the kingdom of God shall be fully and finally established (12:26–29). God is the ultimate and efficient mover of all things (3:4*b*).

b) *God's attitude to Jesus.*—It is evident even from a cursory reading of the epistle that while God is supreme, Jesus stands in a unique relation to him. God's attitude to Jesus is expressed in a number of statements. In the comparison with the angels God is represented as saying that all the angels must worship Jesus when God again brings him into the inhabited earth (1:6). In 1:8*a* either God is said to be the throne of Jesus, the Son, or the Son is himself addressed as God. In 1:13 God bids Jesus to sit at his right hand till he puts the enemies of Jesus beneath his feet. In 10:13 Jesus is represented as taking this exalted position and waiting till the promised subjection of his enemies should be fulfilled to him by God. Von Soden is right in reminding us that we have here only quotations which have been warped from their original meaning by rabbinical exegesis, but he is mistaken in thinking that for that reason they are of no service in determining the Christology

of the author himself. The fact that the author uses such quotations is of significance, though they are not to be interpreted as if they were his own writing. In 1:9*b* God is spoken of as anointing Jesus above his fellows, the angels, and he is there spoken of as the God of Jesus ("God, thy God"). As God exalted Jesus above the angels, so he humbled him for a time beneath the angels (2:9), and this is the act of God who is the prime mover in the matter of the salvation of men (2:10). It is God who perfects Jesus through suffering (2:10), as he perfects through chastening and suffering all the sons whom he receives (12:6 ff.). It is God who glorifies Christ by making him High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. Christ did not take this honor to himself (5:5–10). It is God who raised Jesus from the dead (13:20). God prepared a body for Jesus (10:5).

c) Jesus' attitude to God.—The converse of this is Jesus' attitude or relation to God. As already shown, he is represented in the attitude of a devout and humble man praying to God with strong crying and tears and as being heard because of his piety (5:7 ff.). His sacrifice is voluntary: he offered himself to God blameless (9:14). Perceiving the fruitlessness of sacrifices, offerings, and holocausts in reference to sin, which are offered according to the law, perceiving also that they are neither desired by God nor acceptable to him, he, that is, Jesus Christ said, "Behold I am come, in the roll of the book it is written of me, to do Thy will O God" (10:7). The writer then repeats the quotation, separating the two parts in order to emphasize the close logical relation between them. To the first part of the quotation he adds the expression, "such as are offered according to the law," to indicate that it is not against sacrifices as such that he speaks but against the formal and ineffective sacrifices enjoined by the law. So too the will of God here spoken of is not the will of God ethically conceived, relating to life and conduct only and requiring no sacrifice of any kind. There was probably more of this latter thought in the Old Testament passages themselves than in the quotations as the author of Hebrews understood and used them. At any rate it is clear, both from the immediate context and from the general view of the writer as seen in the rest of the book, that what is here meant is not the will of God conceived in somewhat modern fashion as the ethical standard of life and conduct, but the will of God in relation to a concrete situation, viz., the forgiveness of sin and the sanctification and perfecting of men. For this purpose the sacrifices which were according to the law were of no avail—could be of no avail. For the blood of beasts could never take away sin. But it was far different with the

sacrifice of such a one as Jesus Christ who offered himself blameless to God (9:14). Such a sacrifice could purge away sin (1:3), cleanse the conscience (9:14*b*), and sanctify finally (10:10). The writer represents the preincarnate Christ as realizing this and accepting the challenge which the possibility offered. Christ disregards and sets aside the sacrifices according to the law that he may establish the will of God; 10:10 shows that this will of God means the sanctification of men by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, that body which God had prepared for him (10:5). This passage, then, is an approach in thought to the famous passage of Paul in Philippians (2:6–9). In the author's view it is decisive for the pre-existence of Christ. It expresses also Christ's voluntary obedience to God, not however, in general, but as directed along the single line of securing the salvation of men by the sacrifice of himself.

Christ's attitude to God is, further, one of faith like that of his brethren (2:13; 11:6). Christ is mediator between God and men, the mediator of the new covenant (8:6; 9:15; 12:24). He is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God (5:1).

The consideration of God, and Jesus' relation to God, thus far carried out has yielded material on Jesus' official relation to God rather than on his essential relation to God. The writer fully reveals both expressly and incidentally, that God is supreme, while Christ, superior though he is to angels, prophets, and priests, is distinctly subordinate to God. This supremacy of God and subordination of Christ is more distinct and continuous in Hebrews than in any other writing of the New Testament. At the same time this subordination is not in any degree pictured as one derogatory to Christ. In his human relation to God as man, in his official relations as agent of creation, as captain of salvation, as mediator of the new covenant and High Priest, in all these Christ is subordinate to God. So too in the future age of perfect realization. The angels are to worship Christ, but it is God that bids them do so (1:6). Christ's pre-existence has been re-emphasized, but no further evidence is offered on the past eternity of Christ.

d) *Interpretation of the introduction, Heb. 1:1–4.*—It is in place to consider here the introduction of the epistle which consists of the first four verses—or more strictly speaking of the first three verses, for the fourth verse is transitional to the next section. These introductory verses are to be considered, however, in their specific bearing on the relation of Jesus to God.

Again postponing consideration of the phrase "in a Son" (1:2) till the whole question of Sonship is taken up, the fact is here to be noted

that owing to the position given it, the phrase, ὃν ἔθηκεν κληρονόμον πάντων, is to be taken in close association with the immediately preceding phrase "in a Son." His heirship depends upon, or at least is the natural result of, his sonship and still more because he is the firstborn son πρωτότοκος (1:3). As Riehm says,[1] his heirship denotes the genuineness of his Sonship as well as the permanence of his Lordship. This appointment as heir of all things is natural and right not only because he is Son but also because it was through him that God made the worlds.

In endeavoring to settle the question as to whether this appointment to heirship is conceived by the writer to be quasi-timeless or as referring to the preincarnate Christ or as referring to the exalted Christ one is inclined, as in several other places in this epistle, to thrust aside the arguments for the various views and re-read the passage with intent to take the natural and evident meaning. In that case two things stand out clear. First, the position of the word καί indicates that the making of the worlds took place before the appointment to heirship, for otherwise the καί would have been placed first in its clause. Secondly, the verb ἔθηκεν, since it is not definitely modified here, refers to a definite time at which Christ was "placed" heir of all things. The fact that this heirship is repeatedly referred to as not complete or not yet fully realized (1:6; 1:13; 9:28; 10:13), but as requiring time for its completion, is also in favor of considering the appointment as occurring in time. If this is so, then the most natural time for the appointment to heirship is the time of the exaltation of Christ, when, according to the bidding of God (1:13), he sat down at the right hand of God in the heavens (8:1). This, however, is not to be so understood as to minimize the preincarnate activity of the Son which has been already spoken of. Rather, the heirship is to be considered as an additional gift to Christ, a fitting reward for one who had endured the cross, despising the shame, and so had taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God (12:2). On account of Christ's relation to God as Son and on account of his relation to the world as the agent of its creation, his appointment to the heirship of all things is not surprising, but rather the natural and eminently fitting thing.

Thus far the external or official relation of Christ to God has been considered. There is only one passage in the epistle (1:3) which sets forth the internal or essential relation of Christ to God, and this verse appears in the introduction.

[1] *Lehrbegriff des Hebräerbriefs*, p. 297, note, quoting Chrysostom.

The meaning of this passage has been much discussed, with comparatively little agreement as to result. The chief difference of opinion concerns the word ἀπαύγασμα. There are three possibilities as to the meaning. The word comes from the verb ἀπαυγάζω, "to shine forth." The three possible meanings therefore are: (1) "a shining or flashing forth," referring to the process or action; (2) "that which is flashed forth," viz., "beam," "ray," "brightness," "emanation," referring to the result; (3) a second or further result, viz., "reflected radiance," "reflection." For the noun form ἀπαύγασμα only the last two are likely meanings, since the word by its formation should denote result. The proper word for the first meaning, "shining forth," is ἀπαυγασμός. This word is found in Plutarch.[1] Cremer is surely wrong in making this word denote here the final result of the action, viz., "reflection," though it may possibly denote the intermediate result, viz., "brightness," "splendor."

The difference of opinion, then, is as to which of the last two meanings the word ἀπαύγασμα bears in this passage. Does it mean "effulgence," "emanation," German *Ausglanz*, or "reflection," German *Abglanz?* Modern opinion is almost equally divided, a slight majority, perhaps, being in favor of the former meaning, viz., "effulgence," "radiance," *Ausglanz*. The means of decision between the two meanings must be an impartial study of the passages in which the word occurs. That practically all the Greek fathers take the word here in the former meaning, viz., "effulgence," *Ausglanz*, is not without weight since it must be admitted that they knew Greek. But it is clear that, for an impartial consideration of the meaning of the word, earlier and contemporaneous usage must be considered rather than subsequent usage. The word however is a rare one, and in earlier usage is found only in the Wisdom of Solomon and in Philo. This is of itself significant, however, since on numerous grounds the Epistle to the Hebrews is known to be intimately related to these two works.

A careful consideration of the four passages in Philo and Wisdom of Solomon in which this word occurs is not absolutely decisive in result. In Philo, *De plantatione Noe*, sec. 12, there is every probability that the word means "reflection," *Abglanz*. In Philo, *De concupisc.*, sec. 11, on the other hand there is every probability that the word means "effulgence," "emanation," as the writer is there speaking of the πνεῦμα as breathed into man by God. In Philo, *De mund. op.*, sec. 51, Cremer says that there is a clear case of the word meaning "effulgence," while

[1] *Mor.* 934*D*.

Westcott says that the more appropriate meaning of the word in this passage is "reflection." It is impossible to decide firmly and clearly as to which meaning is required in this passage. The balance of probability however lies in favor of the meaning "emanation," *Ausglanz*.

The passage in Wisd. 7:26 is a famous one. There can be no doubt that the writer of Hebrews was acquainted with it and was influenced by it whether consciously or unconsciously. The writer is speaking of Wisdom as the glorious attribute and attendant of God, and enumerating its qualities. Cremer says the associations and synonyms require the meaning "effulgence" and von Soden[1] agrees with him. Grimm, on the other hand[2] argues very cogently for the meaning "reflection." Again, however, the balance of probability decides for the meaning "effulgence." Of the four passages only one requires the meaning "reflection." So far as previous usage requires, therefore, the balance of probability lies in favor of the meaning "effulgence," *Ausglanz*.

With this information the passage in Hebrews must itself be considered. This involves a consideration of the other words and thoughts of 1:3 to see whether, of the two meanings, the context decisively supports either one or the other.

The word χαρακτήρ, which originally denotes an instrument to stamp with, such as a seal, comes to mean either the stamp (or figure) on the seal or the impression which such a stamp would make. With this word, too, then there is the possibility of a double meaning. Von Soden seems to want to combine these two meanings in the passage, as also the two meanings of ἀπαύγασμα, but his way of working it out is rather ingenious than convincing. Either meaning of the word, not both, may be taken here, provided it be remembered that only the relation of the Son to God is here spoken of, not the relation of the Son to the world or to men. Von Soden is no doubt right in comparing the use here with the use in the passage of Philo where the divine Logos is spoken of as the χαρακτὴρ τῆς σφραγῖδος θεοῦ.[3] But he is wrong in carrying over into the Hebrews passage the idea of instrument which is in the Philo passage. The Philo phrase means "the impress or engraving which is on the seal of God," and the context shows that this engraving is used to make an impression on man and the world. But this latter idea is not at all found in the Hebrews phrase or its context, and is wrongly transferred to it from the Philo passage by von Soden. But the

[1] *Handcommentar zum N.T.*, "Der Hebräerbrief," S. 19.

[2] *Handbuch zu den Apokryphen des A. T., Buch der Weisheit*, VII, 26.

[3] *De plant. Noe*, sec. 5; cf. Philo, *Quod det. pot. insid.*, sec. 23.

first meaning is no doubt the right meaning to assign to the word in Hebrews, namely, "the impress [or stamp or engraving] which is upon the ὑπόστασις of God," not the "impression which the ὑπόστασις of God makes." The word in this sense is most closely allied to its frequent use to denote the mark or stamp upon coin which, as Westcott says[1] "determines," or, as he might better say, "expresses" "the nature and value" of that coin.[2] He says rightly that the word "express," if the English had such a noun, would better denote the idea of the word than "impress." It is that which reveals in characteristic outline the nature of that with which it is connected. It is thus closely related to εἰκών.

The word ὑπόστασις denotes "that which stands under," specifically, that which underlies phenomena or appearance, namely reality. The word then means the "underlying reality," the "essence," as the Germans would say *das Wesen*. Its use for personality or person is a later development that does not belong here.

As the seal and the stamp are closely related, so closely is the Son related to God and related in such a way that he, the Son, is both the likeness and revelation of the underlying essence or nature of God.

It was hoped that within this verse (1:3) itself something would be found which would decide clearly between the two meanings of the word ἀπαύγασμα. This has not turned out to be the case. But the fact that the word χαρακτήρ is so closely related to εἰκών in meaning and that this meaning is almost identical with the second meaning of ἀπαύγασμα, viz., "reflection," makes it altogether probable that the writer would make use of the meaning of ἀπαύγασμα which is further removed from that of εἰκών. In brief, ἀπαύγασμα meaning "reflection" and χαρακτήρ meaning "likeness" are too slightly differentiated to give sufficient point to the writer's use of χαρακτήρ as an additional alternative to ἀπαύγασμα. It may be added that as "likeness" goes suitably with ὑπόστασις, so "effulgence" rather than "reflection" goes suitably with δόξα.

This gives increased probability to the evidence for the meaning "effulgence," gathered from earlier usage in Philo and Wisdom of Solomon. The fact that the Greek fathers uniformly take the word ἀπαύγασμα as meaning "effulgence" adds still further to the probability. This part of vs. 3 may then be translated, "who being the radiance of his glory and the express image of his essence."

[1] *Epistle to the Hebrews, ad loc.*

[2] Eurip. *El.* 559 f.; Arist. *Pol.* 1:9.

These phrases have been considered with the purpose of eliciting the information they give or imply as to the relation of the Son to God. There can be no doubt that as Philo and Wisdom of Solomon apply these and similar terms to the Logos and Wisdom, so the writer of Hebrews applies them to the Son as preincarnate, with whom (as will be seen later) he has identified the Logos. If this identification of the historical Jesus with the Logos (or, as it might better be expressed, the substitution of the idea of the preincarnate Son for the Logos idea of Philo) be accepted, then there can be no reasonable doubt that these phrases introduced by the participle ὤν, as well as the one introduced by the participle φέρων, refer to this preincarnate Son, for they were certainly used of the Logos by Philo.

In the same way it follows that the relation of the Logos to God denoted by these words in Philo forms the model or type, so to speak, which the author has in mind as he uses the phrases of the pre-existent Son. This is not to be pressed so far as to mean that the author is a mere slavish imitator of Philo in his views and method of presentation. But it does mean that in his effort to set forth the significance and supremacy of the historical Jesus he has gone beyond the limits of history, has passed beyond the Jewish identification of Jesus with the Messiah, and has entered the field of Greek thought and philosophy. He has identified Jesus with the Greek Logos, and, having so identified him, he assigns to him as the preincarnate Son some at least of the attributes and relations of the Logos, specifically his relations to God as expressed in the phrases of vs. 3 which we have been considering. This identification having been made by the author of Hebrews, it is necessary to interpret expressions which are used of the Logos as referring not to the historical Jesus only, nor even to the exalted Christ only, but to this personality viewed as continuous, that is to say, though expressed less accurately, to the preincarnate Son. These phrases of vs. 3 are, then, to be interpreted as denoting the inner or essential relation of the preincarnate Son to God.

The last phrase of vs. 3 introduced by φέρων refers to the pre-existent Son. The natural reading of the verse would make the αὐτοῦ after δυνάμεως have the same reference as the αὐτοῦ after ὑποστάσεως, viz., to God. While, therefore, this phrase denotes primarily a relation of the Son to the world, it also denotes a relation to God. The thought is much the same as that of Col. 1:17, but is expressed in a more external way and emphasizes the subordinate relation of the Son to God. The particle τε, which is "adjunctive," not

"conjunctive,"[1] implies that the close relation to God indicated in the immediately preceding phrases is the inner ground of the relation of the Son to the world of time and space. It may be noticed in passing that this phrase is a close parallel, both in thought and in word, to several passages of Philo in regard to the Logos.[2]

But the inner and essential relation of the pre-existent Son to God must be inferred primarily from the first two phrases of the verse. The phrase "radiance of his glory," interpreted by following the similar description of the Logos and Wisdom given in the passage quoted from Philo and the Wisdom of Solomon, indicates that the Son is a revelation of the glory of God but in such a way that the Son himself has a glory which is similar to, indeed the same as, that of God but which is derived from God. Whether the author of Hebrews thought any more definitely of the person of the preincarnate Son than Philo thought of the person of the Logos or than the writer of Wisdom of Solomon thought of the person of Wisdom it may be very difficult to say. The very fact that he identifies the historical Jesus with the Logos would probably cause him to think of the preincarnate Son as a definite person (cf. 10:5 ff.). But it must be remembered that the phrase "effulgence of his glory" is at bottom a metaphor. Without doubt there is a deep reality underlying the expression of the writer, but that reality is described in a figure, the figure of radiating light. That he conceived the nature of the preincarnate Son to be like to and derived from that of God is clear. But his thought was not directed toward unfolding the implications which later theologians saw latent in the phrase, such as that of the eternal generation, φῶς ἐκ φωτός, as that watchword was later used in the church. Delitzsch[3] says that the proper consequences to be drawn from this phrase are: (1) that the Son must be substantial with the Father, inasmuch as what emanates from light must itself have the nature of light, and (2) that the divine generation of the Son must be at once a free and a necessary process within the Godhead, inasmuch as ἡ αὐγὴ οὐ κατὰ προαίρεσιν τοῦ φωτὸς ἐκλάμπει, κατὰ δέ τι τῆς οὐσίας συμβεβηκὸς ἀχώριστον. With Lunemann[4] he might have added the notion of independent existence and the notion of resemblance. And it must be true that some such notions of the Logos and his nature underlay

[1] Cf. Thayer under τε.

[2] Cf. *Quis rer. div. haer.*, sec. 7; *de somn.*, 1, 41; *de mut. nom.*, sec. 44.

[3] *Epistle to the Hebrews*, I, 49.

[4] *Meyer Commentary on the N.T.*, "Hebrews," p. 79.

this phrase. But the mistake of these commentators consists in using what is only an analogy, a metaphor, as if it were a syllogism and in making inferences from it toward which the mind of the writer when he wrote the phrase was not directed. If the writer had been a modern logician, or even one of the early Greek physical philosophers, such procedure might be permissible. As it is, the most we should say is that, expressed by a metaphor, the Logos originally, and hence the Son, as an independent or semi-independent being (expressed by the passive form ἀπαύγασμα) shares in and expresses the glory that belongs primarily to the being of God.

The second phrase, "express image of his essence," goes a step farther, saying that the Logos originally—and hence the Son—is a picture or revelation to the world of the true being or nature of God the one who is in himself invisible (11:27). The first phrase spoke only of the "glory" of God, this phrase speaks of the "essence," the true being of which that glory was but the expression. The phrase is not to be understood as saying that the Logos, and hence the Son, is that true being or essence, or even that he partakes of that essence. This is rather said by the former phrase. The second phrase says rather that the Logos, and hence the Son, is the exact (though not necessarily "detailed") and trustworthy expression of the underlying reality or essence which gives rise to all the divine glory. The word "essence" is not to be limited to metaphysical substance but is to be considered as denoting the whole reality, whatever it may be, which underlies and produces the aesthetic, the mental, the moral, and the spiritual, which are assigned to the divine and are concentrated in the Son.

Combining the two phrases, it is evident that they set forth an essential relation of a unique being to God. As has been shown, this being is supreme over angels, over Moses and Joshua, over priests and prophets. Such is he in himself and such is his relation to God and men that no man, angel, or spirit could do the work that he has done in sacrifice and redemption or be assigned to the place of honor to which he is assigned at the right hand of the majesty on high. And yet, though sharing in and expressing the glory of God and picturing in himself at once metaphysically, mentally, morally, and spiritually the very nature and being of God, he is continuously dependent on God, alike in his historical manifestation as Jesus and in his pre-existent life as Son.

As yet it must be admitted that the evidence for the past eternity of this unique being, the Son, is not clear. Even the phrases of vs. 3 are not strong enough, not definite enough, too metaphorical, to permit

the view that the doctrine of eternal generation was in the mind of the writer. His thought is not directed backward but forward, not to the past eternity or origin of the Son, but to his practical religious and saving work in the world of men. How the Son could be the radiance of God's glory and the express image of his essence was no more an object of thought for the writer than how the shedding of blood could secure the remission of sins. The one was an assumption from his Alexandrian training, the other from his Jewish training.[1] The striking thoughts of this verse are not again referred to even when the writer touches upon the same general topic (cf. 11:3).

e) Interpretation of Heb. 13:8.—The passage in 13:8, "Jesus Christ yesterday and today the same, and forever," must be interpreted in its context. It is connected in thought both with what precedes and with what follows. The first leaders of the church to which the epistle is addressed had died, probably as martyrs to their faith. The readers were in imminent danger of forgetting their high example. They themselves were evidently in danger of thinking their faith not worth the payment of such a price. And this was because they were tempted to think that Jesus Christ was now no longer so real and powerful as in those early days of their first enthusiasm. He had failed to fulfil many of their expectations and so could no longer be counted on to make such costly sacrifice worth while. As an answer to their faithless forebodings the writer assures them that what Jesus Christ was in that earlier time "yesterday" that he is also in the present time "today." The change is in themselves, not in him. The writer is contrasting the two periods and saying that Christ is the same in both. But after he has said this, his thought extends and he adds what he had not at first expected to say, viz., that Jesus Christ is the same "forever." So interpreted, this verse has nothing to say with regard to the past eternity of Christ, but does assert very distinctly his future eternity.

V. VARIOUS TITLES OF CHRIST

1. THE CHRIST (ὁ χριστός)

The title ὁ χριστός with the article occurs in the epistle six times, viz., 3:14; 5:5; 6:1; 9:14; 9:28; 11:26; without the article three times, viz., 3:6; 9:11; 9:24. The use of the title signifies that the historical person whom the writer nine times calls Jesus has been identified with the Jewish Messiah. But it is evident too that by this time the idea has become a common one, for in the three passages mentioned

[1] Cf. von Soden, *Handcommentar zum N.T.*, III, "Der Brief an die Hebräer," S. 19.

above the title is used without the article simply as a proper name, with no particular descriptive force. At the same time there is an atmosphere about the name "Christ" that is different from that about the name "Jesus." The latter denotes the human and the historical; the former approaches somewhat to the official and eternal.

From a study of the six passages in which the phrase "the Christ" occurs it is plain that the writer uses the word of the preincarnate person who is called the Christ. This appears from the passage in 5:5, where it is said that the Christ did not glorify himself to become High Priest. Rather it was God who glorified him thus when he said, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." It is true that the writer does not expressly indicate the time at which Christ entered on his office of priest or became priest. But he seems to speak at least of his appointment to the office as occurring in the preincarnate period. It is closely associated with God's address to him in 5:5 as Son: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." This would seem to show that the writer uses the title "the Christ" of the preincarnate person. This seems the more likely as the writer immediately after speaks of this person whom he has just before called "the Christ" as offering prayers and learning obedience "*in the days of his flesh.*"

The difficult phrase in 11:26, "esteeming the reproach of the Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt," is also most naturally interpreted by taking the Christ to denote the preincarnate person, the Logos. The phrase must be taken as an exact parallel of the thought in 13:13. The latter verse in its context can only mean that that reproach (strictly speaking only a similar reproach) which the Christ bore in being ignominiously thrust out of the city and crucified, they too must bear as partners with him who is the ever-living one. Transferring this interpretation to the phrase "the reproach of the Christ" in 11:26, it means that in suffering with the people of God Moses was bearing such reproach as the Christ bore in his life and death on earth. But how could the writer of Hebrews say this truly of Moses? The most natural explanation seems to be that here too the writer uses the title "the Christ" of the preincarnate one, the Logos. This view is strengthened by the fact that Philo too conceives the Logos to be active in the Old Testament history of Israel.

There are several who insist strongly on the full mystical significance of these passages (11:26; 13:13), notably Delitzsch.[1] The thought is similar indeed to that of Paul, especially as expressed in I Cor. 10:4;

[1] *Epistle to the Hebrews*, II, transl.

II Cor. 1:5; Col. 1:24. But the Pauline mysticism is not found in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and one must guard against attributing it to the writer here. It is true that these two passages (11:26; 13:13) indicate a participation in the sufferings and reproach of Christ, but they do not carry the deep mysticism of Paul. They do not justify speaking of Moses and the New Testament Christians as suffering as members of Christ. This Bleek does when he says that the reproach is that "welche er [Christus] in seinen Gliedern zu erdulden hat."[1] Bleek's view of the passage is essentially right, but he is unduly influenced by the dominant Pauline view when he speaks of believers as suffering as members of the body of Christ. That is a Pauline and also a Johannine figure, but a conception which does not belong to the writer of Hebrews. This is one of the numerous instances in which the thoughts of the writer of Hebrews approach very closely to the thoughts of Paul, yet are to be carefully differentiated in form, content, and point of view.

In the two passages just considered, as also in the four remaining passages (3:14; 6:1; 9:14; 9:28), the title "the Christ" denotes the Messiah in his official function. In 3:14, "For we are become partners of the Christ," etc., the title is used of the official position of Jesus as captain of salvation, the bearer of the blessings of salvation in which believers share with him. It is the same thought as in 11:26 and 13:13 except that there believers were partners with the Christ in reproach and sufferings, here they share in the blessings of salvation which he brings as Messiah. In 6:1 the title is used of the Messiah in his earthly manifestation. It is not, however, the political and economic Messiah of the primitive Christian conception. The doctrine of the Messiah is twofold, elemental and advanced. But even the elemental doctrine, the "doctrine of the beginning of the Christ" (cf. 5:12), consists of the catechetical doctrines of the developed church, doctrines connected with the salvation which he brought who was the anointed of God (cf. 2:3). In the remaining two passages the messianic reference, though present, is not so distinctive (9:14, 28).

The title ὁ χριστός denotes the Messiah, not as the Jews conceived him in the earlier Christian period, political and economic and saving, but as saving only. He is the fulfiller of Old Testament prophecies and promises (9:28). He is the official one from God who established the new covenant and mediated through his sacrifice and High-Priesthood (9:14 ff.) the blessings of salvation and of the future messianic age. As such he is also pre-existent, active in Old Testament history and in the

[1] Bleek, *Commentar über den Hebräer-Brief*, II, S. 803.

creation of the world. This conception, however, is rather that of the Logos than that of the pre-existent Messiah of late Judaism. In Hebrews the title has largely lost its original import and has become a conventional term or a mere name.

2. THE APOSTLE (ὁ ἀπόστολος)

The word ἀπόστολος in the double title applied to Jesus (Heb. 3:1) is, as Bleek says,[1] "ganz eigenthümlich." But perhaps not so altogether peculiar as it has seemed to Bleek and to many early interpreters on account of the fact that there has been a persistent but entirely mistaken tendency to associate the term with the twelve apostles, including Paul. This application of the term to the twelve persons who had seen the Lord and who could do characteristic apostolic deeds[2] is apparently an altogether special and almost technical use of the word. This use may have developed in a measure owing to the insistence of Paul that he too belonged to this select apostolic circle because he had seen the Lord.[3] At any rate it is clear that this technical use of the word had been overemphasized to the exclusion of the general force of the word which held good both before and after this technical use.[4]

This undue emphasis on the technical use has led some to try to relate the force of the word in Heb. 3:1 to the twelve apostles.[5] It has led others to resort to the rabbinic-talmudic use of שְׁלִיחַ as the delegate, deputy, or representative of the Sanhedrin or community on the Day of Atonement.[6]

The word ἀπόστολος here (Heb. 3:1) has no special reference to the twelve apostles and probably no relation with the talmudic usage. The perplexity[7] vanishes when it is recognized that though the technical use of the word ἀπόστολος overshadowed the regular use, it did not

[1] Bleek, *Commentar über den Hebräer-Brief*, I, S. 379.

[2] *Real-Encykl. f. protest. Theologie u. Kirche*, I, art. "Apostel."

[3] Gebhardt u. Harnack, *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchrist. Literatur*, II, i–ii, S. 116 *fin.*

[4] Schmidt unduly emphasizes the technical use when he limits the term to the twelve: *Real-Encykl. f. protest. Theologie u. Kirche*, I, S. 701.

[5] Bleek, *Commentar über den Hebräer-Brief*, I, S. 380.

[6] Tholuck, *Hebrews*, I–II, p. 190; cf. Berach., *Joma.*, I, 5 der Mischna; also Wolf, Wetstein, Stuart.

[7] Cf. Tholuck, *op. cit.*, I–II, p. 18 f.: "This passage contains the only example of the predicate ὁ ἀπόστολος applied to Jesus and has given rise to the puzzling question, 'In what passage of the New Testament is Jesus numbered among the *Apostles?*' These reasons oblige us to look around for some other explanation."

destroy it. The Didache shows plainly that the apostles were professional itinerant missionary preachers and teachers of the gospel[1] who were expected to observe carefully the rules laid down by the Lord in Matt. 10:5 ff. Lucian[2] tells us of Peregrinus, one of these professional, wandering missionary apostles,[3] who fleeced the flock. Harnack says that the whole story of Peregrinus is a splendid illustration of chap. 11 of the Didache.[4]

This helps to remove the difficulty which Tholuck felt so keenly and which hindered him from giving to the word here (3:1) the meaning which he felt was fitting, namely, that Jesus is the "immediate ἀπόστολος τοῦ θεοῦ." This is the thought brought out strongly in Justin Martyr.[5] It is true indeed that this is apparently the only place where the noun ἀπόστολος is used of Jesus, and this is striking and perhaps suggestive, as Bruce says,[6] of the fresh creative genius of the writer and of the unconventional nature of his style. But the thought of this particular relation to God is common enough and the corresponding verb (ἀποστέλλω) is frequently found.[7]

In this passage (3:1) the writer is evidently thinking of the contrast he is about to make between Moses and Jesus. It is better therefore to consider that he applies both titles "apostle" and "high priest" to Moses rather than the latter to Aaron as Keil thinks.[8] This is supported by the fact that Philo speaks of Moses as βασιλεύς τε καὶ νομοθέτης καὶ ἀρχιερεὺς καὶ προφήτης.[9] The word "confession," rarely used in the New Testament,[10] wavers here as Delitzsch says between the subjective[11] and objective,[12] being specifically neither the one nor the other but inclusive of both. It denotes not an objective statement or creed[13] but rather the public attitude or avowal of allegiance to Christianity taken upon themselves by all Christians. It is objective, not in the sense of denoting any definite statement or creed, but as denoting a

[1] Didache 11:3 ff.

[2] 125–200 A.D.

[3] Lucian, *Peregr. Prot.*, 11.

[4] *Texte und Untersuchungen*, II, i–ii S. 38.

[5] *Dial.* 75.

[6] Bruce, *Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 131.

[7] Luke 4:43; 9:48; 10:16; Acts 3:20–26; Gal. 4:4; John 17:3–18, *et passim*.

[8] Keil, *Commentar über den Hebräer-Brief*, S. 87.

[9] *De vita Mosis*, II, (Cohn ed., III).

[10] Only in II Cor. 9:13; I Tim. 6:12, 13, outside of Heb. 3:1; 4:14; 10:23.

[11] See Thayer, *N.T. Lexicon*, *s.v.*

[12] Preuschen, *Handwörterbuch zum N.T.*, says active and passive.

[13] Georg Hollmann, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, 2. Aufl. II, S. 456.

great new system in which Jesus is God's delegate and representative in contrast with the old in which Moses was God's delegate and representative. The significance of the word "apostle" (3:1) is therefore an expression of the thought of λαλεῖν, as used in 1:1, 2 of the Son as a revealer of God superior to the prophets, and in 2:2 f., as a revealer of God superior to the angels. The phrase λαλοῦντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ is the phrase regularly used of the professional itinerant apostles, both in Hebrews (cf. 13:7, 17, 24) and in the church generally. Compared with these apostles Jesus is *the* apostle of the confession who really brings salvation. He is God's commissioned delegate and representative both to declare and to consummate the salvation which is the heart of the new confession (5:10).[1]

3. THE FIRSTBORN (ὁ πρωτότοκος)

The title ὁ πρωτότοκος used of Christ only in 1:6 is rather difficult of explanation. It is a word that is exceedingly common in its literal meaning in the Septuagint and comparatively common there in its figurative uses. It is found four times in the Apostolic Fathers—twice in its literal use, twice in its figurative use. The word ὁ πρωτόγονος, which is identical in meaning, is used frequently by Philo of the Logos. This form is found also in one passage in the Septuagint (Sir. 36:17), though even here one manuscript has the other form. It is an evidence of the dominating power of the strictly Palestinian literature and thought that the form πρωτότοκος is the only one found in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and indeed in the New Testament.

Outside of Hebrews this word "firstborn" occurs five times in the New Testament, viz., Luke 2:7; Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15, 18; Rev. 1:5, and in each case it is modified in some definite way. In Hebrews it is found in three passages, viz., 1:6; 11:28; 12:23. In its literal meaning of "firstborn" it needs no explanation. In its figurative use it has two meanings. First, it denotes, not physical origin, but a relationship of likeness or similarity of character, such as generally springs from physical origin. This use of the word is not found in the New Testament, but the thought is found in Jesus' words to the Jews accusing them that they were of their father the devil (John 8:44). Two cases of this use of the word are found in the Apostolic Fathers. In the Martyrdom of Polycarp, Epilogue 2, as given in the Moscow MS, Polycarp says to the heretic Marcion, "I recognize, I recognize the firstborn of Satan."

[1] Cf. on this whole subject Lightfoot, *Galatians*, pp. 92 ff., and especially Harnack, *Texte und Untersuchungen*, II, i–ii, S. 93 ff., specifically S. 110, n. 23.1.

The same phrase recurs in Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians 7:1. The word in this use denotes the highest possible degree of likeness and similarity of character.

In the second figurative use of the word the two ideas of relationship and likeness prominent in the first use become more or less latent, and the two ideas of priority and superiority or pre-eminence are strongly emphasized. These two ideas are also abstracted very easily and naturally from the literal meaning "firstborn." Priority in time is especially emphasized in Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5, and Heb. 12:23, though the ideas of relationship and superiority are not altogether lacking, as the context in each case plainly shows. In Col. 1:15 and Rom. 8:29, on the other hand, the emphasis is on rank. It denotes the superiority, supremacy, pre-eminence such as belongs only to a firstborn son. In these two passages also, as the context shows, the idea of relationship (not physical, of course, but possibly metaphysical) is comparatively strong.

Of the three passages in Hebrews containing the word, that in 11:28 is literal and simple. In 12:23 the use of the word, and the whole passage in which it occurs, cause considerable difficulty. That interpretation is most natural which makes the word "firstborn" refer not to men (men are referred to later under the category of "just men made perfect"), but to the angels, who are firstborn in the sense of having been created before men.

There are, thus, three prominent ideas in the figurative use of πρωτότοκος: (1) priority in time; (2) relationship of some sort not physical, issuing in ethical likeness, similarity of character; (3) superiority, supremacy, pre-eminence such as the firstborn son enjoys; but that in which precisely this pre-eminence consists must be gathered from the general context.

It is a plausible suggestion that the word "firstborn" here denotes a relation of Christ primarily to the world. There is something in the immediate context to support this. And there is a very interesting parallel to the middle phrase of 1:2 in the Septuagint, Ps. 88 (89):25–28, where God is spoken of as exalting his chosen and anointed servant David over the sea and the rivers and the earth and the kings of the earth. The psalm was interpreted messianically and has many striking parallels to Hebrews. In vs. 27, "I also will make him my firstborn the highest of the kings of the earth," the same word is used as in Heb. 1:2, "whom He made heir of all things." The psalm must have been familiar to the writer of Hebrews and probably this passage was in his mind. One

might then assume that in the thought of the writer πρωτότοκος was synonymous with κληρονόμον πάντων of 1:2, and that therefore the word denotes here primarily a relation of Christ to the world as the sum-total of things. But the context does not sufficiently support this exceedingly plausible interpretation of the word. The word translated "world" in this verse does not denote the world as the sum-total of things, but rather the world as the dwelling-place of human beings, the inhabited earth. Thus there is no ground in the context for identifying the firstborn in 1:6 with the heir of all things in 1:2. Moreover, the relation of 1:2 with Ps. 88 (89):28, while probable enough, would not justify the extreme inference of identifying "firstborn" of 1:6 with "heir of all things" of 1:2.

That the word "firstborn" of 1:6 should be used so absolutely and without any qualifications suggests rather that its significance must be taken from the immediate context. If so, it must be taken as practically equal to ὁ υἱός, and denotes therefore primarily a relation to God, a relation which is not further defined, a relation such as angels do not enjoy, viz., the relation of honor, responsibility, love, and devotion to God which can most fittingly be described as the relation of a firstborn son to a father.

It is difficult to state more definitely the author's idea of this relationship of Christ to God. Its uniqueness is emphasized by contrast with the world of angels, men, and things. As in the ancient world the relationship of the firstborn son to the father was superior to that of the other sons and daughters, so the relation of Christ to God was superior to that of the angels. The word in itself need not imply pre-existence and essential relationship to God (cf. Exod. 4:22; Jer. (31:9), but in our writer's thought it probably implies both.

4. THE LORD (ὁ κύριος)

For the interpretation of this title it will be well, first, to present an outline of the development of the meaning of κύριος in the New Testament writings, showing that the word in its meaning is Hebraic and Aramaic, not Greek in origin, and that the meaning of the word was greatly influenced by associations with the Jewish messianic concept and later by associations with the actual Greek word κύριος as it was used in the Graeco-Roman world, so that it came to have a greatly heightened significance, a significance never indeed equal to θεός yet closely approaching it. In the second place, we must investigate the use of the title κύριος in Hebrews, and its place in the general development.

There were three Hebrew words which in the Septuagint were translated by κύριος, יְהוָה, אֱלֹהִים, and אֲדֹנָי. Of these three, the first, יְהוָה, is the peculiar name of the God of the Israelites, which came later to be reckoned as too sacred for pronunciation. Hence the word אֲדֹנָי was pronounced in its place. The second word, אֱלֹהִים, was occasionally translated by κύριος in the Septuagint, but more frequently by θεός, which is its regular equivalent in the New Testament. Two words, אֵל, and the possibly later אֱלוֹהַּ, which are singular forms and which seem to be related to אֱלֹהִים[1], are also translated by κύριος, but they occur rarely. The third word, אֲדֹנָי, "my Lord," does not often occur in reference to God but is translated by κύριος. Κύριος thus does triple work in the Septuagint as a designation for God, and this in addition to its being used to translate some of these words when they do not denote God, especially אֲדֹנָי, since all except יְהוָה and אֱלוֹהַּ have other uses in addition to denoting God.

Thus the word κύριος was exceedingly well known to the New Testament writers from Old Testament usage. For this reason it would come readily to the mind of New Testament writers as a title of Christ when they spoke of him or wrote of him in Greek. This would be especially true after Christ's resurrection and exaltation,[2] because of numerous Old Testament quotations in which κύριος is applied to Christ as Messiah even where in the original the application was clearly to God (cf. Heb. 1:10). Wernle holds that Paul substituted κύριος for Χριστός as being more suggestive and meaningful to Greeks;[3] and Deissmann emphasizes strongly the fact that Paul's usage of the term as well as the New Testament usage in general arises as at the same time a parallel to, and a contrast with, oriental usage of the word in designation of princes and kings. This oriental usage conquered the western world, being applied to the Roman emperors, probably to Nero first.[4] But this is putting a greater weight on Greek influence than the facts warrant. No doubt Graeco-Roman usage influenced Christian usage, but as Case[5] shows, there is some evidence and much probability that an equivalent

[1] Many scholars hold that אֵל, the plural of which would be אֵלִים, is not related to אֱלֹהִים; cf. Brown, Briggs, and Driver, and Buhl's Gesenius.

[2] Cf. Paul, Phil. 2:9 ff., which implies that the confession is a result of the exaltation.

[3] *Die Anfänge unserer Religion*, 2. Aufl., S. 176.

[4] *Licht vom Osten*, S. 257.

[5] "Κύριος as a title for Christ," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, XXVI, 1907.

of the Greek title κύριος was applied to Jesus during his life. In the first place, this would be entirely natural to Semitic usage. Oriental usage in general, both in the present day and as far back as early Egyptian times, uses a title like κύριος[1] *only* for persons recognized as superiors in education, station in life, etc. In the second place, more definite justification for carrying this title back to the Aramaic-speaking Jews of Christ's own lifetime is found in the preservation of the watch-word μαρανάθα, "Our Lord cometh," or "Come, O Lord!" (cf. I Cor. 16:22) by Paul. Here מָרָן is the Aramaic for "Our Lord,"[2] and must be a stray bit of primitive tradition fortunately preserved for us by Paul.[3]

This introduces the intermediate element of Aramaic usage, for it is agreed that the originals of Jesus' teachings were given in Aramaic. It is agreed too that the first disciples of Jesus spoke of him as "Lord," and so must have used some form of מָר,[4] to say nothing of רַב.

Thus three distinct factors contributed to the significance of the title κύριος in the New Testament field. First, there was the Old Testament usage, especially of אֲדֹנָי as it is met by and passes into the Aramaic usage of מָר, which is no doubt, as Case shows, the origin of the application of the title "Lord" to Christ.[5] Concomitant with this there was the influence of the Septuagint in its oft repeated κύριος for יְהוָה, אֲדֹנָי, and occasionally for אֱלֹהִים (אֵל and אֱלֹהַּ). There is, thirdly, the somewhat later influence of Graeco-Roman usage which Wernle and Deissmann (also in less degree Dalman) emphasize as being specially manifest in New Testament writings. There is need of more detailed

[1] Arabic *chawaga* or *effendi* = our "Mister"; Aramaic מָרְיָ or רַבִּי.

[2] Cf. Johannes Weiss, *Christus, Die Anfänge des Dogmas*, S. 24.

[3] It may be added that in spite of John's interpretation διδάσκαλε, the Aramaic title Rabbi, Rabboni would also find natural equivalent in Greek in κύριε, an equivalent apparently more fitting in some places than the technical term διδάσκαλε which John and Matthew use; cf. Mark 10:51; John 20:16. There is nothing intrinsically in רַב to make it specifically applicable to teachers. The Greek διδάσκαλος in the Graeco-Roman world was not a solemnly respectful word, such as the Aramaic רַב. Κύριος on the other hand would carry with it the high tone of respect and reverence which the oriental meant to convey when he addressed his teacher as "Rabbi." Moreover the word רַב is often translated by κύριος, e.g., רַב חֵילָא = κύριος τοῦ στρατοῦ = στρατηγός.

[4] מָרָא, the Lord; מָרִי, my Lord; מָרָן, our Lord.

[5] Cf. also J. Weiss, *Christus*, "Es ist aber nicht zu bezweifeln, dass schon in der judenchristlichen Urgemeinde der Erhöhte 'Herr,' 'unser Herr' genannt worden ist" (S. 24).

and thorough study into the interworking of these three influences in their contribution to the meaning of κύριος. Case's presentation is of great service but seems to leave the three elements too much detached. The application to Jesus of the title "lord" (מָר) by his Aramaic-speaking followers would begin with his disciples and would be almost equal to the title διδάσκαλος, the Aramaic word being used frequently (as also רַבִּי, rabbi) as a title of respect. This would extend as the circle of Christ's followers extended and as their respect and reverence for him increased. When they recognized in him their Messiah, and especially after his resurrection and exaltation, the title would begin to carry an enlarged content. At this stage the influence of the Septuagint use of κύριος would become exerted strongly from passages in the Old Testament which were plainly messianic. This would be the period of extension beyond the Palestinian Aramaic usage into the larger extra-Palestinian Greek usage. But it is unlikely that the transition would be from the Aramaic מָר to κύριος as it was used in the extra-Palestinian Graeco-Roman world with which Paul was familiar. Rather it is probable that this transition was mediated by the thought of the Aramaic מָרָא or מָרָן passing into that of κύριος as it was used in the Septuagint for אֲדֹנָי. The two were closely allied, though of course κύριος as used in the Septuagint covered a larger field. Then, as Case says,[1] owing to their enlarged conception of Christ's exaltation and mission they would apply to Christ passages of the Septuagint where κύριος was used of God[2] without however intending to identify Christ with Jehovah in significance and glory.

They were conscious of the difference between God and Christ, so that they increasingly reserved the word θεός for God but increasingly applied the word κύριος to Christ, since the latter was a broader term and though also applicable to God was not so lofty and distinctive as Θεός. That all the evangelists should change the Hebrew and Septuagint "paths of our God" of Mark 1:3 and parallels to "his paths" is a striking instance in support of this.[3]

A little later than this influence of the Septuagint, but largely parallel with it, would come the influence of the non-biblical Greek usage of κύριος. This non-biblical usage, though it cannot be thought of as originating and contributing the word as a title of Jesus, must have had considerable influence in altering and enlarging the content of the title

[1] Case, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

[2] For יְהוָה or אֱלֹהִים.

[3] Case, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

as applied to Christ. Deissmann especially exhibits the use of κύριος in the Graeco-Roman world.[1] Its highest content in Graeco-Roman usage is found in its application to the Roman emperor as master of the world. It is expressive of an increasingly high regard and homage, though not of the veneration expressed by θεός which is indicative in the Graeco-Roman world of deification. The word κύριος is used of Nero in an Oxyrhynchus papyrus containing a letter of the Egyptian Harmiusis to the official Papiskos dated July 24, 66 A.D.[2] An Egyptian document of 54 A.D. applies the title to Claudius.[3]

It is evident, then, that this was a common title of the Roman emperors in the time of Paul, and Paul perhaps had this title of the emperors in mind when in I Cor. 8:5, 6 he says that though there are many "lords," yet for Christians there is but one "Lord," Jesus Christ. This may be the beginning of the influence upon the word by Graeco-Roman usage which, when developed, issues in the attitude of Polycarp (155 A.D.), who, when the Roman officials, Herod and Nicetes, urge him to recant by saying, "What wrong can there be in saying 'Caesar [is] Lord'?" refuses and prefers death.[4] Case holds that it was from no reluctance to grant the title κύριος to Caesar that Polycarp refused to say "Caesar [is] Lord," but because he "refused to recognize the supremacy of Caesar as compared with the loyalty due to Christ."[5] But this is not a natural interpretation in view of the fact that in another place Polycarp says, "We have been taught to pay respect in every way that is fitting—when such respect is not hurtful to ourselves—to powers and authorities appointed by God."[6] Case is tempted to minimize the significance which the title κύριος as used of emperors and of Christ had acquired by this time. It is true that its significance is not equal to that of θεός, but its frequent association with θεός in emperor-worship had given it a somewhat higher connotation which carried with it some of the atmosphere of θεός. Had the Christian conscience of the time of Polycarp been able to distinguish between κύριος used of the moral and spiritual lordship of Christ and κύριος used of the temporal lordship of Caesar, Polycarp might have called Caesar "Lord." There was no inherent reason why the "supremacy of Caesar" and the "loyalty due to Christ" should clash except just this, that the word κύριος as used

[1] *Licht vom Osten*, S. 253 ff.

[2] Grenfell and Hunt, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, II, No. 246; also *Licht vom Osten*, S. 111.

[3] *Licht vom Osten*, S. 256, and *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, No. 37.

[4] *Martyrium Polycarpi*, 8:2. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 161. [6] *Martyr. Polcarp.* 10:2.

alike of Caesar and of Christ had acquired a sort of divine connotation, probably from its associations with θεός. So the Christian conscience, as in the case of Polycarp, could not ascribe the title κύριος to Caesar.

From the beginnings of the work of Paul to the martyrdom of Polycarp is a period of a hundred years. During this period the word κύριος gradually developed a significance approaching that of θεός, a significance which tended to supersede its original meaning and precluded its being applied by the Christian conscience to anyone but Christ. It is not necessarily contradictory to this view that during the same period the "simpler form κύριος became the current expression,"[1] and that its "use as a mere name tended to supplant its distinctively title import." However, by Polycarp's time its use as a mere name had not actually supplanted its title import. Polycarp did not die for a mere name. That the "term in Greek usage early became little more than a mere proper name . . . . employed in referring to him [Christ] in his earthly career with no more heightened sense than was attached to the name Jesus" is quite probable, but the "heightened sense" lay latent in the term as a title and could arise at any moment of necessity with marvelous dynamic force, as in the case of Polycarp.

Case well says that "if any special significance associates with the word when applied to Jesus it is his person rather than the word itself in which the special meaning inheres." From the Aramaic beginnings when the word מָרִי is used of Jesus by his followers as a title of respect, due to his influence and authority as a teacher, to its highest significance as a title which cannot be given to any other than Christ, the word κύριος expands in content so as to contain and express what Jesus as Messiah and exalted Savior became in the consciousness and experience of his followers, viz., a unique authority in the realm of the moral and spiritual, the realm of the conscience and the soul.[2]

Further, it is necessary to investigate the use of κύριος in Hebrews and to attempt to fit it into its place in the general development. The instances of the use of κύριος in Hebrews are in all sixteen, twelve being instances where the title clearly refers to God;[3] four being

[1] Case, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

[2] Cf. the brief but interesting statement of Johannes Weiss in *Christus* on this title "Der Herr," S. 24–29.

[3] Ten in quotations, 7:21=Ps. 110:4; 8:8=Jer. 31:31; 8:9=Jer. 31:32; 8:10=Jer. 31:33; 8:11=Jer. 31:34; 10:16=8:10=Jer. 31:33; 10:30=Ps. 135:14; 12:5=Prov. 3:11; 12:6=Prov. 3:12; 13:6=Ps. 118:6; two in the author's own usage, 8:2; 12:14. In all the former, the word corresponding to κύριος in the original Hebrew is יְהוָה.

instances where the title as clearly refers to Jesus (1:10=Ps. 102:26;[1] 2:3; 7:14; 13:20). The title, therefore, occurs quite rarely in Hebrews as compared with its occurrences in Paul's writings.

The only quotation in Hebrews in which the word is used of Christ, though the original clearly referred to God, is 1:10=Ps. 102:26. Here it seems that the title κύριε misled the Septuagint reader and also the writer of Hebrews into the view that the psalm was messianic.[2] This transference may have been made easier by the fact that some parts of the psalm (cf. vss. 21, 22, 28) have a touch of the typical messianic outlook.[3] Kuenen is hardly right when he says κύριε "has been adopted from the Greek version and does not occur in the original." As has been said before, it may well be considered a translation of אֲדֹנָי in the second verse before (LXX, vs. 24; Heb. vs. 25) which is not translated in the corresponding Septuagint verse. Such an addition would not be impossible, but it is not necessary to assume it in this passage.

In any case Kuenen seems to be substantially right in saying that such an example as this shows, as numerous other examples in the New Testament show, that by this time the Christians had come to look upon κύριος as a title of the Messiah. When they had taken this step it was an easy and slight advance to refer many passages to Jesus as Messiah where κύριος denotes not the Messiah but Jehovah himself and where, as here, the passages have little if any messianic import. This passage, therefore, would show that Hebrews was written when it was quite common to attribute κύριος as a title of the Messiah to Jesus and under this title to apply passages to Jesus which, before the increasing domination of Jesus' character and person, had been understood only of God.

Heb. 2:3 contains the first case of the application of the title κύριος to Jesus in the writer's own words, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation which, having at the first been spoken by the Lord, was confirmed unto us by those who heard?" This is one of the comparatively few but significant passages (cf. Heb. 5:7) which put the writer *en rapport* with the primitive Christian tradition. Its whole atmosphere is quite distinct from that which characterizes the writer's conception of salvation as presented by him in the rest of the epistle.[4]

[1] Heb. 1:10 is a quotation in which κύριε seems at first sight to be added, but where more probably it is a translation of אֲדֹנָי, occurring in vs. 24 of the Hebrew, but not translated in the corresponding verse of the Septuagint.

[2] Cf. Kuenen, *The Prophets and Prophecy in Israel*, p. 468.

[3] Johnson, *The Quotations of the New Testament from the Old*, pp. 270 ff.

[4] Cf. his peculiar conception of the rest of God, the nature of faith, the High-Priesthood of Jesus.

And yet the writer himself seems not to be conscious of the fact that this salvation which he represents as being first spoken by Jesus must have been something widely different from, not to say at variance with, the salvation which the writer sets forth by his peculiar Alexandrian exegetical methods. One might be inclined to consider this phrase as an interpolation; yet there is no ground whatever for rejecting the phrase except this contrast between the salvation which Jesus actually preached and the salvation which the writer sets forth in his epistle. The writers of the New Testament were not conscious of the sharp contrast which the modern man sets up between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith and experience. To the writer of Hebrews they were, if not identical, at least vitally and essentially related as this passage shows.

The fact is that in this passage (2:3, 4) there is a genuine historical reminiscence with all the atmosphere of that earlier period preceding and immediately succeeding the death and resurrection of Jesus—the atmosphere of the early Christian community. The title τοῦ κυρίου as well as the word σωτηρία retain here a primitive color and content cognate to that period. The title τοῦ κυρίου has here a meaning largely divested of Septuagint and Graeco-Roman influence. It carries with it a high religious sense and denotes the Christ as the recognized leader, teacher and spiritual guide and Savior of the primitive community of Christians. It is possibly an example of a use of the title to denote Jesus in his earthly career which Case refers to as quite common.[1] The author, of course, takes it in its higher significance.

A somewhat similar connotation inheres in the title as it is used in 7:14 and 13:20, the only other two passages of the author's own words in which the title is used of Jesus. In 7:14 the title is used in the strong spiritual sense of religious teacher and leader, devotion to whom gives a consciousness of unity (ἡμῶν) to Christians. The connotation of Messiahship is assumed and carried with it, though the idea as such is not expressed by it. So in 13:20, where the associations reveal the high significance which the title has for the writer and his readers. Their Lord is mediator of the new covenant, the great shepherd of the sheep, the one whom God raised from the dead. But the title itself denotes unique religious control and supremacy of the highest type. The addition of the name "Jesus" gives here (13:20) again the atmosphere of the earthly life.

The writer also uses κύριος of God, but only twice in his own words,

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 260.

viz., 8:2, where he speaks of God as having established the true tabernacle, and 12:14 where he says that without holiness no one shall see the Lord. In both cases the title has the article as when used of Jesus. The writer's regular designation of God is θεός, and it is perhaps somewhat indicative of the connotation of κύριος that in 8:2, where θεός would afford the natural contrast to ἄνθρωπος, ὁ κύριος should be used in preference. Biesenthal[1] finds in it a hint that Hebrews was written originally in Hebrew, as otherwise the writer would certainly have used ὁ θεός, which is the proper contrast to ἄνθρωπος. This, of course, is untenable; but this particular occurrence may fairly be taken as indicative of how even at this time the title κύριος carried the θεός atmosphere with it (cf. 13:3).

To sum up with reference to κύριος. It arose in Aramaic (מָרֵי) as the title regularly applied to honored and influential persons and specifically to Jesus as religious teacher. When the gospel came to be expressed in Greek, especially when it moved out into the Graeco-Roman world, the title κύριος was used, probably at first suggested by and under the influence of the Septuagint usage, where the title was used of the Messiah as well as of Jehovah. Under influence of the Septuagint usage and somewhat later under the influence of the contrast with Graeco-Roman usage, especially in emperor-worship, the content of the title κύριος as applied to Christ was extended and heightened. Though one might naturally expect to find it, there is no evidence in Hebrews of the latter influence. The word has on the one hand the connotation of the earthly Jesus as supreme religious teacher and Savior, leader and guide in the realm of spirit (7:14; 13:20). On the other hand it manifests the heightening of Septuagint influence in 1:10 which originally referred to God (Jehovah) and was not distinctly messianic. It is not permissible, however, to infer from this passage that the writer of Hebrews meant to place Jesus on an equality with God. The growing content and heightened force of the word κύριος sprang originally from the increasing impression Jesus made upon his followers in their faith and experience of him, especially after his death and resurrection. It is hardly proper to infer anything more from κύριος as it is used in this epistle than the supreme significance of Jesus in the realm of religion and the spirit.

5. THE SON (ὁ υἱός)

The phrase Son of Man occurs in the Epistle to the Hebrews but once (2:6) in a quotation from Ps. 8:5. It does not refer to Jesus (except

[1] *Der Apostel Paulus an die Hebräer*, S. 210.

indirectly), being used both in the original and in the quotation as a variant for "man," with possibly a slight increase of emphasis on the weakness of human nature. The title "Son," on the other hand, occurs eleven times with reference to Jesus (1:2, 5, 8; 3:6; 4:14; 5:5, 8; 6:6; 7:3, 28; 10:29).

Of the remaining eleven occurrences of the word "son" in the epistle, two (11:21 and 12:7*b*) are used of direct physical descent, one (11:24) of sonship by adoption in the human sphere, two (7:5; 11:22) of indirect physical descent; five other occurrences[1] exhibit the writer's figurative religious use of the word as denoting the ethical relation of filial obedience and divine love as between faithful Christians and God. These last five passages indicate in all probability the meaning of the word in 2:10 where the followers of Christ are called "sons." The word is not supernatural or metaphysical in its content, but denotes the same ethico-religious relation to God.

a) *Development of the conception of sonship.*—In the development of the meaning of the title "Son," three main phases are readily discerned: (1) the literal-physical, (2) the figurative-ethical, and (3) the divine-metaphysical. The first may be passed over. In the second phase the writers of the Old Testament use the word "Son" figuratively to denote a special relation of dignity and favor based upon a sympathetic likeness of character whether good or bad. As applied to a relation to God the whole people of Israel felt themselves to be the favored nation in especial relation to God as "Son" (Exod. 4:22, 23).[2] The king as representative of the whole nation was called Son of God.[3] So all the theocratic kings came to be called Sons of God in this special sense, until finally the title is applied to the ideal King of the future, the Messiah, at least in passages which were interpreted messianically (Ps. 89:27, 28; cf. also IV Ezra 7:28; 13:28).[4] This is the Semitic idea which never fully passes into the metaphysical, though in later Judaism there is an advance in this direction.[5] The Semitic idea "Son of God" is figurative, ethical, religious.

It is clear that the divine-metaphysical meaning of the phrase "Son of God" is found within the New Testament, though there is much dispute and uncertainty as to specific instances. The divine-

[1] Heb. 12:5 (twice), 6, 7*a*, 8.

[2] Cf. Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, I, S. 265 f.

[3] II Sam. 7:14; Ps. 2:7; 82:6; 89:27, 28.

[4] Wellhausen, *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, Heft VI, S. 219. Gunkel in Kautzsch, *Apocryphen u. Pseudepigraphen*, II, S. 344; Volz, *Jüdische Eschatologie*, S. 213.

[5] Volz, *op. cit.*, sec. 35, 1*a*, S. 213.

metaphysical meaning, however, is clear in such passages as Luke 1:32–35, as also in Matthew. How much earlier than Luke and Matthew the metaphysical use is to be seen is a question beset with many difficulties. But it is plain that somewhere between the historical theocratic use of the Old Testament and the divine-metaphysical use of some parts of the New Testament this radical change in the meaning of the phrase "Son of God" as applied in the New Testament to Jesus was brought about.

Wernle attributes the origin of this metaphysical use to Paul.[1] He says that the phrase had been used by the earliest community, but "in a very harmless sense," denoting Jesus as "the favorite of God, his confidant, knowing his ways better than anyone else." But it may be seriously questioned whether Wernle is not here as in other places overestimating the influence of Paul as against the primitive Christian community. This view apparently forces Wernle into holding that the reason set forth by the Gospels for the condemnation of Jesus is unhistorical. Wernle says that the accusation of blasphemy was the result of the charge of orthodox Jews against Christians that they were marring monotheism by making a second God out of Jesus.[2] It is hard to believe that this is merely a reflection of the debates between Christians and Jews in the postresurrection period. If the accusation of blasphemy is not historical, no formal ground of condemnation has been handed down to us. Assuming it to be historical[3] it would follow that the Jewish leaders and rulers at least felt that there was such a content in the phrase "Son of God,"[4] that for such a one as Jesus to claim to be such was supreme blasphemy.

But does this of necessity imply the dogmatic metaphysical meaning of the phrase in the thought of the rulers of the Jews? Holtzmann takes the view that it does not,[5] holding that the charge of blasphemy is fully accounted for by the fact that such a poor and powerless peasant of Galilee should lay claim to such a high official position. Dalman seems to waver between two positions. He maintains[6] that "the assertion of messianic rank could not, indeed, in itself have led straightway to a death sentence," holding that a test of his claim according to b. Sah. 93 *b*. would in that case have been the necessary step before sentence of death. This is not allowing sufficiently for the pressing circumstances,

[1] *Beginnings of Christianity*, I, p. 250. [2] *Ibid.*, II, p. 47.

[3] Cf. Brandt, *Evangelische Geschichte*, S. 81 f.

[4] Matt. 26:63; Luke 22:70; Mark 14:61, "Son of the Blessed."

[5] *Neutest. Theologie*, I, S. 265 f. [6] Dalman, *Words of Jesus*, p. 313.

and moreover no test was needed: the thing was plain enough. He holds that the blasphemy consisted in the words he added about the Son of Man,[1] which constituted a claim to share in God's majesty. Wrede's position[2] is by all means the more natural interpretation, viz., that there must have been something in the content of "the Christ the Son of the Blessed" (Mark 14:61) which allied it distinctly with God and thus constituted it blasphemy. Holtzmann's emphasis on the insignificance and lowliness of Jesus is still necessary to understand properly how a conviction of blasphemy could be attained and is well brought out in the text by the emphatic σύ (Mark 14:61). But it is not of itself sufficient. The Christ, the Son of the Blessed, must in the thought of the rulers have been ranked with God in some unique sense.

On the other hand, as Holtzmann's view does not go far enough to explain satisfactorily such blasphemy, so Wrede perhaps goes too far in making such a wide separation between the thought of the writer Mark and the thought of the high priest and Sanhedrin.[3] To maintain that Mark here considers the title "Son of God" as "supernatural and metaphysical" is to say what is altogether probable. But to say that he reads the meaning back *ex post facto* into the mouth of the high priest is to destroy the historicity of the narrative, and to leave us no assigned reason for the sentence of death upon Jesus. The point is that if blasphemy in some form is the historical reason for the death of Jesus then between the Jewish rulers' conception of the title "the Christ, the Son of God" and Mark's conception of the same there cannot possibly be such a wide divergence that to the latter it was blasphemy but to the former not. This does not necessarily mean that the rulers also had Mark's conception of a "supernatural and metaphysical" Messiah in the modern sense, but it does mean that they ranked the Messiah with God rather more than with men.

This is supported by the view that in all probability most of the Jews at the time of Jesus conceived the Messiah as supernatural or as superhuman. This was especially true in apocalyptic circles, but it is a question of debate as to how widespread these apocalyptic views were.[4] Volz well notes the varied elements entering into the view of the Messiah

[1] Dalman, *Christianity and Judaism*, p. 63.

[2] Wrede, *Das Messiasgeheimnis*, S. 74 f.

[3] *Ibid.*, S. 75.

[4] Volz says (*Jüdische Eschatologie*, S. 212), "In apokalyptischen Zirkeln dagegen wird das eschatologische drama auf einer erhöhten Bühne vorgeführt und in ihrem überirdischen Schauspiel ist auch der Messias eine transcendente Gestalt."

at this time, but repeatedly emphasizes the fact that the Messiah, both as Son of Man, and, though rarely and late, as Son of God, had at the time of Jesus come to be viewed as a supernatural, transcendent figure.[1]

This view certainly makes an understanding of the charge of blasphemy easier and fits with the facts. It does not necessarily show just what conception Jesus had of himself. His hesitation and different viewpoint may be expressed in σὺ εἶπας of Matt. 26:64,[2] which was probably his real answer rather than the ἐγώ εἰμι of Mark 14:62. But it indicates that even in the time of Jesus a view of the Messiah prevailed which made it blasphemy for anyone to claim to be such who did not do the marvelous divine works of wonder which the Messiah as Son of God was expected to do. This distinct advance upon the theocratic idea of the Messiah may be called the supernatural or superhuman idea as over against the metaphysical, which may have been introduced in one form by Paul, in another by Matthew and Luke, and in still another by the author of the Fourth Gospel.

Jesus' own thought as to the meaning of Sonship which he applied to himself is a problem beset with many difficulties. He is not represented as using the full phrase "Son of God" as a title for himself, though he frequently puts himself in the relation expressed by it—most notably in Matt. 11:27. It is impossible here to go into the debate upon this striking passage.[3] It seems clear that the accepted reading of Matt. 11:27 is not the original reading, and equally clear that what seems to be the original reading[4] gives a meaning more cognate with the immediate context, less Johannine, less theological and mystical, and more in line with the general synoptic teaching. E. F. Scott[5] sums up the reliable results perhaps with too severe a brevity. The passage remains a

[1] *Jüdische Eschatologie* (*passim*), especially S. 211 f.; also sec. 21; sec. 35, "Es ist ein weiter Weg von dem nationalen menschlichen Davidssohn zu dem ewigen Himmelsmenschen und wir können nicht annehmen, dass der Uebergang sich in der Form eines allmählichen innerlichen Fortschreitens vollzogen hätte; vielmehr setzt mit der Vorstellung vom transcendentem Himmelsmenschen etwas Neues ein."

[2] *Jour. Bib. Lit.*, XIII, 45.

[3] See Schmiedel, "Die Johannische Stelle in Matthäus und Lucas und das Messiasbewusstsein Jesu," *Protestantische Monatshefte*, 1900, S. 1; Johannes Weiss, *Die Schriften des N. Testaments*, I, S. 321; Harnack, *The Sayings of Jesus*, pp. 272–310, where he gives a full list of references to discussions.

[4] Harnack, *Sayings of Jesus*, p. 295: πάντα μοι παρεδόθη ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρός, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἔγνω τὸν πατέρα [vel. τίς ἐστιν ὁ πατήρ] εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ ᾧ ἂν ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψῃ.

[5] "An Exegetical Study of Matt. 11:25–30," *Biblical World*, March, 1910.

strong and beautiful expression of Jesus' consciousness[1] of an altogether unique relation to God which is not exhausted by being described as intellectual only,[2] but grips the deeper reaches of personality involving the religious and moral.[3] Beyond all reasonable doubt it was through this unique consciousness of Sonship, to which the high priest and the Sanhedrin were blind, that Jesus came to accept the title of Messiah which in its official theocratic content with the addition of the supernatural was in a sense understood by the rulers.[4]

These two aspects of the meaning of the phrase "Son of God," viz., the religio-moral use of Jesus and the theocratic semi-supernatural use of the Jews blend and, under the influence of Greek thought and philosophy, form the later divine-metaphysical idea of Sonship, which is found in its initial stages in Paul and more fully developed in Matthew and Luke and in the Fourth Gospel. There seems to be considerable probability for Sanday's view[5] (in opposition to Schmidt's[6]) that this turn toward the metaphysical interpretation under the influence of Greek thought goes back at least to Paul and possibly to the first Jerusalem community. But it may have taken considerable time for the clear-cut Greek metaphysical view to crystallize. Its stages may be seen in the comparatively simple Christology of the speeches in the first chapters of Acts where Jesus is frequently spoken of as not only Christ and Lord, but "servant" (Greek παῖς), which to Greeks meant "child," "son." This was further defined by Paul in reference to the resurrection by

[1] Cf. N. Schmidt, art. "Son of God," *Enc. Bib.*, sec. 12; Pfleiderer, *Urch.*, I, S. 445 f.; Brandt, *Evangelische Geschichte*, p. 561. Probably Johannes Weiss does not mean to say that the emended form of the saying cannot go back to Jesus: "Aber so wie uns dieser (in der 2. Strophe Matt. 11:27) überliefert ist bietet er uns schwerlich ein Wort Jesu, sondern eher ein Stück Gemeindetheologie."

[2] Harnack, *What Is Christianity?* p. 128: "Rightly understood the name of Son means nothing but the knowledge of God." This is either true or not true according as the wide or narrow meaning is given to the word "knowledge."

[3] Holtzmann, *Neutest. Theologie*, I, S. 267: "die ungehemmte Lebensgemeinschaft mit Gott, die unverkümmerte Berührung mit dem Göttlichen. . . . . Was aber wir auf dem langen Wege der Reflexion nachzubilden versuchen, das taucht für den religiösen Genius als unvermittelte und ungebrochene Offenbarung aus den Tiefen, seines Gemuthslebens auf. Und zwar Letzteres so, dass das Sohnesbewusstsein sich entsprechend der sittlichen Ausfüllung der Gottesidee, die in dem Vaternamen liegt, auch durchaus sittlich bestimmt und bedingt fand. Der religiöse Genius war zugleich ein sittlicher Genius."

[4] Holtzmann, *Neutest. Theologie*, I, S. 271; Harnack, *Sayings of Jesus*, p. 301.

[5] *The Life of Christ in Recent Research*, pp. 130 f.

[6] Art. "Son of God," *Enc. Bib.*, sec. 22.

which Jesus was determined the Son of God with power (Rom. 1:4). Later the thought was carried back to the transfiguration or to the baptism (Mark 9:7 and parallels; Mark 1:11 and parallels), and still later to the birth in the infancy-stories of Matthew and Luke. The Fourth Gospel carried it back still farther and gave the impetus to the fuller metaphysical interpretation of the creeds.

From this passage in Mark 14:62 it is clear that for the author at least the three titles, Son of God, Son of Man, and Messiah become practically synonymous. It would be going too far to say that the two titles "Son of God" and "Son of Man" were merely synonyms for "Messiah"; this would be to disregard the various shades of meaning which developed in the historical use of the terms. In their origin and original content at least they were quite distinct, but at the time of Mark's writing they had converged and almost focused in one common meaning.

b) *Use of the title "Son" in Hebrews.*—It has been seen above that the writer of Hebrews has the distinctly religious Semitic use of the word "son" (12:8), as applied to Christians. He has also the thought of God as father of all spirit beings, men included (12:9). He does not, however, use the term "son" or "sons" of man or men in general. As applied to Jesus there are in all eleven passages where the title "Son" or "Son of God" occurs; these must receive careful attention.

Passing over for the present the first case of the use of *υἱός* as applied to Christ (1:2), the next case is found in the familiar quotation of Ps. 2:7 in 1:5, "Thou art my Son; today have I begotten thee," immediately followed by the quotation from II Sam. 7:14, "I shall be to him a father and he shall be to me a Son." It is not necessary here to decide whether the king whose installation was celebrated in the original psalm was David or Solomon or some other.[1] Nor is it necessary to show in what sense or in what way the psalm was referred to the ideal future King, the Messiah.[2] It is enough to realize that the passage originally had a definite reference to a historic king of Israel who, according to the familiar Semitic idea (Jer. 2:27), was recognized, declared, and adopted as God's Son when he was installed as king over God's people; that later it became by common consent referred to the Messiah,[3] and in this way the writer of the Hebrews uses it of Jesus.

But this throws the difficulty into the question as to how the writer

[1] Cf. Bleek, *Commentar über den Hebräer-Brief*, I, 110 f; Bäthgen, *Die Psalmen*, S. 3; Briggs, *Psalms*, I, p. 12.

[2] Bleek, *op. cit.*, p. 111 f.

[3] Acts 4:25, 26; 13:33; Rev. 2:27; 12:5; Heb. 5:5.

conceives this appellation, which originally was referred to a definite point of time, to be applied to Christ whom he clearly considers to be pre-existent. Has the reference to a specific point of time which is so explicitly brought out by *σήμερον* quite faded from his thought so that he means *σήμερον* to denote eternity? Such a meaning, though strange to the original (Ps. 2:7), is not strange to Alexandrian usage, and this may be another point of contact between the author and Philo.[1] An interesting and suggestive use of the word is found in the Epistle to Diognetus which seems to mark an advance in effort at precision of thought, or perhaps rather an effort to explain that which in Hebrews was left unexplained and puzzling.[2] This quotation would seem to be a distinct reference to the passage so frequently upon the lips of primitive Christians with regard to Jesus as Messiah (Ps. 2:7). It is further an express statement of what lies latent in the thought of the writer to the Hebrews. For him too Christ was *ὁ ἀεὶ* [*ὤν*], but it would seem that in some way he conceived of him as at some time constituted or declared "Son." For *σήμερον* in Diognetus cannot mean "today" of the time at which the author is writing. Nor can it be quite equal to *ἀεί*, from which it is so clearly distinguished by a contrast. The word stands between these two meanings and denotes a specific point of time at which he who was forever, became "Son."

This, with less distinctness, is the conception of the writer to the Hebrews, rather than the Philo usage of the word denoting "eternity." For in his use of the quotation he shows that in his conception God might possibly have so addressed one of the angels who with Christ were pre-existent and coexistent spirit beings.[3] Thus addressing the pre-existent Christ, the writer seems from one point of view to abandon the natural and necessary meaning of the words, especially of *σήμερον γεγέννηκα*, so as either to imply that the word *σήμερον* is equivalent to "eternity" or to leave the words without any point or meaning in their new context. From another point of view, by the reference to the pre-existent angels as over against the pre-existent Christ, he seems to imply that this pre-existent Christ rather than any one of the angels

[1] Cf. Philo, *De Fuga*, §11 (Cohn ed., III, p. 122) *σήμερον δ' ἐστὶν ὁ ἀπέρατος καὶ ἀδιεξίτητος αἰών· μηνῶν γὰρ καὶ ἐνιαυτῶν καὶ συνόλως χρόνων περίοδοι δόγματα ἀνθρώπων εἰσὶν ἀριθμὸν ἐκτετιμηκότων· τὸ δ' ἀψευδὲς ὄνομα αἰῶνος ἡ σήμερον. Leg. Alleg.*, III, 8, (Cohn ed., I, p. 118) *ἕως τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας, τουτέστιν ἀεί.*

[2] Diognetus, 11:4, 5: *Οὗτος ὁ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ὁ καινὸς φανεὶς καὶ παλαιὸς εὑρεθεὶς καὶ πάντοτε νέος ἐν ἁγίων καρδίαις γεννώμενος. οὗτος ὁ ἀεί, ὁ σήμερον υἱὸς λογισθείς, κτλ.*

[3] Heb. 1:5: "For to what one of the angels did he ever say, Thou art my son?" etc.

was at some specific time thus addressed and by this means constituted or given the status and dignity of "Son" by adoption.

The same uncertainty or double point of view is seen in Heb. 5:5, where the same passage is quoted but quoted this time in reference to Christ's becoming High Priest. It has been already noticed that the author apparently does not specify when Christ entered upon his High-Priestly office. But this passage (vss. 5, 6) indicates nevertheless that the author conceives of Christ not as having been eternally High Priest but as at some specific time having become or having been declared and constituted High Priest. And in these verses the declaration of High-Priesthood is put upon a par (καθὼς) with the declaration of Sonship. Why the two—Sonship and Priesthood—are here so closely associated it is hard to tell unless in some way the author conceived of the two as very similar in their significance and possibly identical in point of time. This specific time of inception, however, is not mentioned by the writer either for the Sonship or for the Priesthood. But at least the natural or face value of the language he uses in these two passages (1:5; 5:5, 6) makes such an interpretation natural, indeed almost necessary.

Further reference will be made to this view that the writer, even though vaguely and almost inconsistently, had in mind a specific time at which Christ was constituted Son and High Priest. It may be well here to show briefly how this may be in perfect line with the developing thought of the primitive church, especially upon the question of Sonship.

The simplicity of the Christology of the first few chapters of Acts has been recognized as indicating that these chapters in all probability reflect with comparative fidelity the actual thought in the primitive community shortly after the resurrection of Jesus.[1] Now the primitive community evidently used Ps. 2[2] very largely and universally in their

[1] Cf. Schmiedel, art. "Acts of the Apostles," *Enc. Bib.*, sec. 14: "it is hardly possible not to believe that this Christology of the speeches of Peter must have come from a primitive source." Cf. Harnack's statement from a somewhat different point of view, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 190: "Of course what is given us even here is never tradition absolutely primitive and unaffected by legend; it is rather historical tradition handed down by enthusiasts." Cf. *Conclusion*, p. 298: "It is not only, taken as a whole, a genuinely historical work, but even in the majority of its details it is trustworthy. Except for a few panegyric aberrations in the direction of the Primitive Community, it follows no bias that distorts its representation of the actual course of events." The aberrations Harnack speaks of, even if granted for these early chapters, do not destroy their reliability as a source for the thought of the Primitive Community. What can be considered as the actual facts out of the so-called miraculous or supernatural stories is of minor importance here.

[2] And the related O.T. passages, II Sam. 7:12–14; Ps. 89.

effort to express the significance of Jesus and their conception of his person. Acts 2:32–36 refers the inception of the Messiahship and Lordship of Jesus very pointedly to the exaltation which was a result of the resurrection. This great enthronement as Lord and Christ would act in two ways upon the thought of primitive Christians. It would clarify and intensify whatever tremulous thoughts some of them had had of Jesus as Messiah before his death and resurrection and it would lead them in addition to carry the developing and enlarging thought of the later time back into the earlier period. So the baptism experience loomed larger as the anointing of this Jesus who was to be Messiah and King (Acts 4:27, and especially 10:38 which no doubt referred directly to the baptism). In this primitive Christology the word that plays the largest part as a designation of Christ is παῖς θεοῦ (3:13, 26; 4:27, 30). This word, which may mean "servant" or "child," is no doubt later supplanted by υἱός, and even in Acts, though not in the earlier chapters, the quotation of Ps. 2:7 which has been under consideration in Heb. 1:5; 5:5 is used and the Sonship of Christ is directly connected with the resurrection (Acts 13:33). This may indicate a slight advance on a somewhat earlier conception.[1] It is true that the words (Acts 13:33) are in a speech made by Paul. But apart from the nature of the speeches in Acts[2], it is clear that the Christology of the speech does not depart very far from the Christology of the primitive community, and yet in one or two respects seems to approach Paul (Acts 13:23=Rom. 1:32), for Paul too (Rom. 1:4) has a modified form of the thought that Christ was declared or constituted "Son of God" by the resurrection from the dead.[3] Perhaps Paul's thought was that Christ, who was eternally Son, was publicly and powerfully manifested to be such by the resurrection from the dead. If this was his thought he must be considered as having advanced more considerably upon the primitive conception and then would have approached closely to the writer of Hebrews. It may be, all

[1] Cf. Harnack, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 195 f. Harnack considers 12:25—15:35 a separate section which he calls Antiochean and considers trustworthy also. "We find in the source nothing that demands a late date of composition, while the excellent accounts concerning Jerusalem and Stephen, and the special veneration shown to Barnabas, lead us to conclude that we have here a writing of high antiquity."

[2] Cf. Schmiedel, art. "Acts of the Apostles," *Enc. Bib.*, sec. 14: Headlam, art. "Acts of the Apostles," Hastings' *Bib. Dict.*, I, p. 33.

[3] Cf. Jülicher, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, II, S. 221. Others to be sure lay the emphasis on "with power," thus reconciling the primitive conception that Christ was constituted Messiah and Son by the resurrection with the thought of the pre-existent Christ as Son.

things considered, that this is the more natural and likely view to attribute to Paul. But his advance, however great, has not obliterated the mark of the primitive view, which was that Jesus was constituted Messiah, Lord, and Son by the resurrection and exaltation.

The enlarging conception of Jesus as Son of God continued to press back the inception of Sonship. The next stage was that of the miraculous conception, in which the Semitic idea of Sonship passed over into the Greek metaphysical idea (Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:32).

But even this was not sufficient. The idea of pre-existence emerged very early—indeed in the majority of Jewish views it was predicated of the Messiah.[1] At first the thought probably was of an ideal pre-existence of the Messiah, just as in the case of Wisdom (Prov. 8:22 ff.) and of the Son of Man (Volz, *op. cit.*, S. 215, 217 f.). But the tendency was increasingly strong to make this pre-existence real and active. This was done when the ideas of Messiah, Son of Man, and Son of God were to a large extent fused with the Greek concept of the Logos. The terms "Son of Man" and "Christ" tended to pass out of use, owing to Greek influence. The term Logos did not appeal to the early church, though later on the lips of the early Greek apologists (cf. Justin Martyr, *passim*) it became common as a designation for Christ. The strong religious consciousness of the later primitive church preferred the term Son of God or Son, and the inception of this Sonship was by the author of the Fourth Gospel, who says nothing of the virgin birth, carried back to the beginning (John 1:2, 18). It should still be carefully noted, however, that within the New Testament period there is apparently a reluctance to apply the word "Son" to this pre-existent being as such. So much so that within a number of the books of the New Testament it has been recognized as a difficult question whether the word "Son" is at all used of the pre-existent Christ. This is especially true of Hebrews.[2]

This reluctance to apply the highest title "Son," "Son of God" to the pre-existent Christ as such will be referred to again. It is significant

[1] Cf. Volz, *Jüdische Eschatologie*, S. 217.

[2] Macintosh, in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* (1 vol.), art. "Person of Christ," IV, sec. 3, "A very difficult question is whether in this epistle 'Son' is applied to the preincarnate One or to the incarnate Christ only. . . . . No one can doubt that the writer's mind starts from Christ the Son as known in history and in his exaltation, and holds these revealing facts steadily in the foreground of his thought; but does he go farther back, and carry this Sonship into the pre-existent state?"; cf. A. B. Davidson, *Hebrews*, note on the "Son," pp. 73 ff. Also Bruce, *Epistle to the Hebrews*, pp. 440 f., "The same interest, that of magnifying the sacrifice, requires the Sonship to be of older date than the life on earth."

here as indicating that when the Christians began to identify Christ with the Logos, thus making him, even if somewhat vaguely, eternal, the words of Ps. 2:7, especially *σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε*, tended to lose their specific reference to any definite inception of Sonship. Their adoptive significance was lost, the famous christological watchword of the primitive community only caused confusion, till finally the word *σήμερον* was interpreted as denoting the timeless "today" of God in somewhat the same way as a day of God was said to be a thousand years.

The period of confusion is exhibited in the author of Hebrews (1:5; 5:5). For it is clear now, though it was not so clear to the author, that the words are hardly fitting to his thought of Christ. For the epistle plainly predicates a real and an active pre-existence of Christ, even if the author hesitates to apply the word "Son" to him as pre-existent (10:5). But he fails to give any point of time to which the words of Ps. 2:7 could apply, though the words in their proper meaning require such a time.

That later writers felt the irrelevancy of these words as used of the Logos or the eternal Christ, and sought to clear up the confusion caused by them, is shown by the way in which they sometimes explained them. Clement of Rome[1] uses this quotation (Ps. 2:7), but in him the words have lost their specific reference more than in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Clement says, "But of his Son the Master said thus: 'Thou art my Son, I this day have begotten thee. Ask of me,'" etc. He speaks of the one to whom these words are said as already "Son," and does not pause to explain.

A more suggestive use is found in Justin Martyr.[2] In this passage the fundamental thing to be noticed is not the precise meaning of Justin, about which there may be some doubt.[3] It is rather the fact that he

[1] Clement, *I Ep. ad Cor.*, chap. 36.

[2] *Dialog.* C. 88, p. 316 *C*, *D*: *τὸ πνεῦμα οὖν τὸ ἅγιον καὶ διὰ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, ὡς προέφην, ἐν εἴδει περιστερᾶς ἐπέπτη αὐτῷ, καὶ φωνὴ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν ἅμα ἐληλύθει ἥτις καὶ διὰ Δαυὶδ λεγομένη, ὡς ἀπὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ λέγοντος ὅπερ αὐτῷ ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς ἔμελλε λέγεσθαι Τίός μου εἶ σύ, ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε· τότε γένεσιν αὐτοῦ λέγων γίνεσθαι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, ἐξ ὅτου ἡ γνῶσις αὐτοῦ ἔμελλε γίνεσθαι.* Cf. *Explanation of Methodius: τὸ δὲ Ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε, ὅτι προόντα ἤδη πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ἐβουλήθην καὶ τῷ κόσμῳ γεννῆσαι, ὃ δή ἐστι, προσθὲν ἀγνοχούμενον γνωρίσαι.* Cf. also other quotations and explanations as given by Otto in his edition of Justin Martyr, *Dialogue*, chap. 88.

[3] The sentence is loosely formed. The participle *λέγων* is anacoluthic; grammatically it ought to agree with *πνεῦμα* or *φωνὴ* but the real meaning predominates and the form *λέγων* is used with the feeling that "God" is the subject, i.e., as if

feels the irrelevancy of this quotation and is forced into an explanation of it which refers the σήμερον to some specific time in the future, viz., the time of the γνῶσις or revelation of Christ, whether this γνῶσις be interpreted historically of Jesus' coming into the world[1] or mystically, that is, spiritually. That Justin should be forced to make this explanation shows how the original meaning and face value of the words persisted. For Justin does not hesitate to call Christ "God."[2] And, indeed, it is not at all likely that the γένεσις of Christ of which Justin speaks in explaining σήμερον γεγέννηκα is considered by him as constituting Christ "Son." Justin would consider and call Christ eternally Logos and Son. The face value of the words σήμερον γεγέννηκα is satisfied by an explanation of the γένεσις at a specific time as the revelation of this hitherto hidden Son. But this shows that even in Justin Martyr the atmosphere of the historical Jesus still clings to the title "Son."

In the same line of development, there is found a puzzling passage in the Apostolic Fathers (*Ep. to Diognetus*, chap. 11).[3] There can be little doubt that Lightfoot is right[4] in translating "He, I say, who is eternal, who today *was* accounted a son," as against the translation of the Ante-Nicene Fathers,[5] "This is He who, being from everlasting, *is* today called the Son." That is, the word σήμερον does not have the meaning "at the present time," but is almost certainly a reminiscence of the common quotation of Ps. 2:7. But this does not necessarily annul the suggestiveness of the passage as a parallel to that of Justin. In fact

ὅπερ αὐτῷ ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς ἔμελλε λέγεσθαι were active. The participle λέγοντος would more naturally be taken as agreeing with αὐτοῦ (Christ), and may indeed be so taken. But the sense is better if λέγοντος is referred back to Δαυΐδ. ἔμελλε in both cases denotes a future-to-a-past point of view. τότε is emphatic and proleptic pointing forward to ἐξ ὅτου which may mean either "from which [time]" or "at which [time]." In its first occurrence γίνεσθαι stands for a general present. One would expect γενήσεσθαι but the writer allows his own point of time, viz., the time of writing, to intrude when he should not. He returns to the future-to-a-past point of view in ἔμελλε γίνεσθαι.

[1] Justin may have the miraculous conception in mind much as in the previous part of the sentence he speaks of Jesus as being accounted the son of Joseph, the carpenter: καὶ νομιζομένου Ἰωσὴφ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱοῦ ὑπάρχειν.

[2] Cf. *De Resurrectione*, 10. If this reading ὁ θεός is refused (cf. Otto, *De Resur.*, p. 10, n. 16), still it is plain that Justin though never actually identifying Christ with God gives to him an exceedingly high rôle and calls him "God" (*Dial.* 57).

[3] οὗτος ὁ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ὁ καινὸς φανείς, καὶ παλαιὸς εὑρεθείς, καὶ πάντοτε νέος ἐν ἁγίων καρδίαις γεννώμενος. Οὗτος ὁ ἀεί, [ὁ] σήμερον υἱὸς λογισθείς.

[4] Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, p. 510. [5] Vol. I, p. 29.

the whole context bears a striking resemblance to that of the passage in Justin, and probably the writer to Diognetus would have given an interpretation to σήμερον similar to that which Justin gives. Like the passage in Justin, it emphasizes the contrast which was felt between the eternity of the being who is called "Son" and a word[1] which by its proper meaning contradicted that eternity.

What truth there may be in any or all of these varying views of the inception of Christ's Sonship, viz., resurrection and exaltation, baptism, miraculous conception, Logos-doctrine, it is not in place to discuss here. This explanation of their relation and development may not, indeed, be the right one. But it accounts well for the presence of the quotation of Ps. 2:7 in Heb. 1:5; 5:5, and also for the fact quite noticeable in the whole of the New Testament, and especially in the earlier parts, that there is a reluctance to apply the title "Son" to the Christ as pre-existent.

This view is strengthened by the fact that while the writer of Hebrews conceives the Son as a being whose life extends probably into the eternal past, yet in none of the other passages in which the title "Son" is used does he employ it in a clear and unambiguous way of the pre-existent one. It might be answered that for one who is beforehand determined that the title "Son" could only apply to the earthly Christ, either in the days of his flesh or as exalted, it would be impossible for any writer so to use the title as to compel reference to him as pre-existent. But in such a passage as 10:5–9, which clearly implies pre-existence,[2] and may appropriately be compared to Phil. 2:5 ff., the author might have used the title "Son" so as to refer clearly to the pre-existent one.

It is difficult to determine the precise content of the word "Son" in the conception of the writer. In fact there are not sufficient data to do so. In 1:8 it is evident from what follows that the conception of "Son" is a high one, even though the first part of vs. 8 were to be translated, according to Westcott and Hort, "Thy throne is God forever and ever and the sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of His Kingdom." But even here the adoptive idea thrusts itself to the front in 1:9.

[1] It is impossible here to go into the probable date of chaps. 11 and 12 of *Ep. to Diognetus*. It is generally recognized that there is a break between chaps. 10 and 11 and that the epistle proper ends with chap. 10. Also that chaps. 11 and 12 are probably a homily; cf. Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius*, S. 757: "Es ist das Fragment einer Homilie und gehört vielleicht in den Kreis des Methodius." Methodius died *cir.* 311 A.D.

[2] The participle ἐρχόμενος being present implies that what is said vss. 5–7 is said coincidently with coming into the world.

In 3:6 Christ is contrasted with Moses. While both were faithful, Moses was faithful only as a servant as being *in* and therefore also a part of God's house. But Christ was faithful as a Son *over* God's house. The thought here is closely connected with that of Christ as a "firstborn" Son (1:6). In God's house Christ holds the high and honored position and power which was universally assigned to such a one in ancient and especially oriental states. But in this passage again it is interesting as well as perplexing to note that while the writer probably made no conscious distinction between believers of the old dispensation and those of the new as constituting God's house, yet those over whom Christ is placed as "Son" are the Christians, not the Old Testament saints.[1] It is another indication that almost unconsciously the title "Son" carries to the writer the atmosphere of the earthly and exalted Jesus. It does not refer so fittingly to the pre-existent Christ. In this passage the word "Son" lacks the article, is qualitative, and denotes such a one as bears the same relation to God and his house (Christians) as the firstborn bears to the father of a household. There is nothing to indicate how he was constituted Son or in what this Sonship consists.

In 5:8 the title occurs again without the article, being qualitatively used. It is found in the midst of a passage which, as already noted, emphasizes thoroughly the humanity of Christ. The thought of the immediate context is similar to that of 12:5 f., which emphasizes the Father's love and care in chastening true sons. But the contrast is clearly and strongly marked in that while in 12:5 f. the chastening and consequent training is natural and to be expected of *every* son (cf. 12:6), in 5:8 the author designates the chastening and sufferings of Christ as altogether exceptional and exceptional just because he was a "Son." This marks the Sonship of Christ as in the author's conception unique. It also clearly predicates Sonship of Jesus before his resurrection and exaltation. Does it use the title of him as pre-existent? Possibly so; but even if so, the experiences which he relates have to do entirely with the historical Jesus.

In Heb. 7:28 again the title is qualitative: "one who is a son perfected forever." This passage also tends to separate Jesus from men, even from Christians, but this separation is closely connected with the fact that he is High Priest. As such he is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens." This description of the Son is not one that refers to moral character only. It

[1] Cf. Heb. 3:6*b*, "whose house are we, if we hold fast," etc.

is in a large measure official perfection, perfection that consists in proper relations and proper surroundings. It is, however, contrary to the emphasis of the writer upon the weakness (5:2*b*, 7 f.) and true humanity to say that there is "no contrast between the state of the Son before perfection and when perfected.[1]" That would empty his words of any meaning. It is probably true that in the author's conception the contrast does not imply any positive moral sinfulness in the Son before perfection. The state of perfection here is in evident contrast with the state of weakness (7:28*a*). The state of perfection as contrasted with the state of weakness in the days of his flesh has an added increment of positive moral strength, of power, and of efficiency. This is a condition of character and saving power unattained by any Levitical high priest, altogether unattained by anyone. Does the word "Son" here apply to Christ as pre-existent? It would surely seem so, for it is the word of the oath which was after the law, viz., Ps. 110:4, which declares a Son High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. Sonship and Priesthood are closely associated in 5:5. The writer may well have conceived the pre-existent Christ as declared by God High Priest proleptically. In this passage he seems to separate between the Sonship and High-Priesthood. But as the inception of Sonship is left indefinite by the writer, so the inception of Priesthood is left indefinite. The Son seems to be spoken of as pre-existent, but he is described in words which denote a perfection gained by earthly experiences.

In four other passages[2] the full title "Son of God" is used of Jesus. In the first (4:14, "Jesus the Son of God"), by being coupled with the name "Jesus," the title is again redolent of the life and experiences of the man Jesus. The context is also similar to that of 7:28, since Jesus, the Son of God, is the great High Priest who by his experiences is full of sympathy for human sins and weakness. By this too the title "Son of God" is here surrounded with an atmosphere of earth.

In 6:6 and 10:29, passages which are quite similar, the supreme and awful dignity and worth of the person designated is brought out by the title "Son of God." The solemn weight which the title can and does here carry is brought out by the fact that to trample under foot the Son of God, to count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing (10:29), to crucify the Son of God afresh (6:6), and to put him to an open shame is the unforgivable sin, the final tragedy. It is not necessary to show here what is the source of this

[1] A. B. Davidson, *Hebrews*, p. 145.

[2] Heb 4:14; 6:6; 7:3; 10:29.

terribly somber strain in Hebrews.[1] It is clear that the supreme dignity and work of the one who is called the Son of God is the very thing that makes such a sin possible. And yet even in these tragic circumstances the things which constitute the crime, viz., counting the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, crucifying the Son of God afresh, etc., involve references only to the experiences of the earthly Jesus.

The third use of the full title "Son of God" occurs in the chapter which deals with Melchizedek as the type of Christ (7:3, "Being made like the Son of God," etc.). This bit of characteristic Alexandrian allegorical exegesis deserves more detailed and intensive study than has yet been given to it. For the writer as for Philo there is an aureole around the weird figure of Melchizedek. The oracle of Ps. 110:4 is the chief cornerstone of the writer's whole presentation of Jesus. Generally the figure of Melchizedek is viewed as the type of Christ and the writer views his thesis, of the intricacy of which he is himself fully aware (5:11), as doubly proved since as a matter of fact one did actually appear in history who answered all the requirements of this oracle (7:15 f.). Jesus is a Priest after the order of Melchizedek and not after the order of Aaron (7:11). And this means particularly two things, viz., a new and better covenant (7:12), and an unchangeable because eternal and perfect priesthood (7:16 f.). But the likeness to the type Melchizedek consists chiefly in the fact that Christ's Priesthood is forever, eternal (7:16); it does not pass to another (7:24) because he who exercises it possesses a life of such essential and moral quality as to be indestructible (7:16).

It is to be noted, however, that in this phrase, "made like unto the Son of God" (7:3), the title is used in a way directly contrary to the usage of the passage in Ps. 110:4 on which it is supposed to be based, contrary also to the application which the writer himself makes in the rest of this passage. This has caused interpreters a great deal of trouble and it has been explained in various ways.[2]

The simplest and probably the best explanation is to be found by considering that the same process of thought occurs here in connection with the writer's use of the passage in Ps. 110:4 as occurred in connection with his use of the passage in Ps. 2:7, as above described. In

[1] Perdelwitz (*Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, Heft 2, 1910; *Das literarische Problem des Hebräer-Briefs*, II, S. 105) argues for the origin of Hebrews in the circle of presbyters in Asia Minor, on the basis of similarity to a newly discovered conclusion of Mark and to I John on the question of the forgiveness of sins.

[2] Cf. Bengel, "non dicitur filius Dei assimilatus Melchisedeco, sed contra; nam filius Dei est antiquior et archetypus"; cf. 8:5; Bleek, II, S. 315 and I, S. 360.

both cases the writer's identification of Christ with the Logos, his view that Christ is pre-existent and perhaps eternal, causes him to use language of Jesus as the Son of God and as High Priest which is really at variance with the original and with any natural meaning of the Old Testament passages and inconsistent with the writer's own understanding of those passages. It must be admitted that here if anywhere the writer uses the title Son of God of Christ as pre-existent. But in doing so he has directly reversed the thought of his original passage (Ps. 110:4). He has not only gone beyond it; he has contradicted it or at least has revealed that it is inadequate and inappropriate to express the thought that is in his own mind. It is another support to the thesis that the author is carrying back contributions from actual history and his own experience into the Old Testament Scriptures rather than carrying forward only what is found in the Old Testament Scriptures.

The title "the Son of God" as it is found here (7:3) does not indicate anything additional as to content. Nor does it throw any light on the question as to how the writer considers Jesus to be or to have become the Son of God. It is even possible, though hardly natural, to hold that it is not used of Christ as pre-existent but in a free and somewhat loose way, by a sort of hysteron-proteron, denotes the earthly Jesus.

There is but one case left of the use of "Son," viz., 1:2. It lacks the article and is therefore used qualitatively, meaning "one who is a son," i.e., "who bears the relation of a Son to God." The context here as in most of the other cases shows that the word denotes one supreme and unique in dignity, worth, and power.[1] It is possible that the phrases of 1:3*a* carry a somewhat indefinite ontological meaning, but they cannot be pressed, and the view here taken is that they are conceived by the author metaphorically rather than metaphysically. By this it is meant that the author is not endeavoring to express by them the nature or process of Sonship.

It is quite possible, indeed probable, that here again the writer is using the word "Son" as denoting not merely the earthly but also the pre-existent Christ. This is the more likely since in the immediate context he speaks of him as creator and sustainer of the worlds. But as noted already, the writer's thought moves not back to further pre-existent processes or activities, but immediately forward to the High-Priestly work of salvation, the exaltation and the superior dignity of the Son.

Further, even here in this succinct, artistic, and lofty epitome and introduction, the thought of the writer transcends the limits of his

[1] Cf. use of "Son" in the parable of the Husbandman (Mark 12:1–12).

language. It is not only that in his supreme function as revealer the Son is placed with the prophets, so that here too the atmosphere which surrounds the word "Son" is that of the earthly life of Jesus. But the phrase "whom he appointed heir of all things" (1:2*b*) points to a specific time. If the word ἔθηκεν is taken to mean "placed," "established," and the word κληρονόμος made to denote a realization still future to the ἔθηκεν,[1] this time may well be taken to be the exaltation. But whether taken in this way or in some other way the phrase seems somewhat incongruous with eternal sonship. The word carries with it something of the adoptive idea.

c) *Summary.*—To sum up the content of the title "Son" or "Son of God": The writer's free and unexplained use of the word shows that he had taken it over from the early Christian usage. He feels no need of defining it in any precise way but uses the term as one quite familiar. The ethical and religious use of the term is easily distinguished, the atmosphere of the earthly life of Jesus surrounds it continually. Nevertheless it is clear that in the writer's conception the term has passed beyond its Hebraic meaning and has taken on somewhat of the Greek meaning. For the writer clearly applies the term "Son" to one whom he considers pre-existent in a real sense. In a few cases probably he uses the title "Son" of this pre-existent being as such, but he does not reveal in what precise way he considers him to be the Son of God. He probably considers him as eternal, but he does not dwell upon or attempt to give a rationale of his past eternity. Yet by the language used he reveals that he had taken up terms which originally denoted an adoptive conception of the Sonship which in all probability was the conception first developed and held by the Christian church. The writer's own thought, however, has passed beyond this. He holds the Son to be a being altogether unique in his mission and work, in the dignity and worth of his person, and in his eternal relation to God as Father.

[1] Davidson, *Hebrews*, p. 40.

III. RÉSUMÉ: THE TOTAL CHRIST PERSONALITY

It is clear that the writer holds that there were three well-marked periods in the career of this person whom he calls Jesus, the Son, the Christ, the Lord, or Jesus Christ. These periods are, first, the period of pre-existence, secondly the period of the earthly life, "the days of his flesh," and thirdly the period of the exaltation. It is one and the same person whose career embraces these three periods. This person is represented as speaking in the first period with a consciousness of what would happen in the second (10:5; 2:12), and as acting in the second period with a consciousness of what would happen in the third period (12:2). The oneness of this personality is assumed in the introductory words of the epistle (1:2–4) as well as in other portions of it (7:16; 2:9; 2:12). In fact, it is an assumption that pervades the epistle in such a way that the writer feels no need of specific reference to it.

The duality in the personality of Jesus expressed in this thesis by the phrases "human elements" and "transcendent elements" might be considered with advantage from the standpoint of the three periods above named. The human element is manifested particularly in the earthly period denoted by the writer as the "days of his flesh," the second period. This is the period of temporary humiliation (2:9 f.) between the former period of glory and the succeeding period of still greater glory. But it is in this period of humiliation that he lives his life and does his work as a man in such a way that he earns the exaltation and the greater glory of the third period.

There is little reference to the historical Jesus because the writer is interested in the sacrificial death and the High-Priestly work. His life as a man is viewed as the essential preliminary, first for the sacrificial death, and secondly for the sympathetic discharge of his High-Priestly function in salvation (2:14, 17; 10:5 f.). In the case of Jesus, both the becoming man and the death are voluntary, not involuntary as in the case of other men. It is not in the life of Jesus as such that the writer is interested.

But it does not follow that the writer presents the life of Jesus as a mere semblance of human life, a make-believe. There is no tinge of Docetism in the epistle. This perhaps results from the fact that the writer may have viewed all human lives as incarnations of pre-existent spirits

(12:9, 23*b*; 10:5*b*).[1] In any case, in describing the earthly period of the career of Jesus the writer shows an insight probably surpassing that of any other New Testament writer into the development of character under stress and suffering. And further, there is no intrusion of the miraculous in the presentation of the writer, such for instance as is found running parallel with the teaching in the Fourth Gospel. The writer may have accepted much of this miraculous element in connection with the historical life of Jesus, but he does not use it in his presentation. The use of historical material by the writer is decidedly limited, but in so far as he does use it he makes it abundantly clear that in his conception the life of Jesus was a genuinely human life. It was lived under conditions and limitations that hampered other lives. Its characteristic was not that it was a life free from these limitations but that it overcame them.

The "transcendent element" in the life of Jesus is manifested rather in the first and third periods than in the second. The third period begins with the exaltation preceded by that which corresponds to the ascension (4:14; 6:20). In the case of Jesus these are transcendent elements, though the writer has the conception of the ascension or translation of Enoch (11:5). Repeatedly it is stated that Jesus is exalted at the right hand of God (1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2). This exaltation is conceived of as a reward for work accomplished (5:8 f; 8:6) and as befitting the nature and inner worth of Jesus (12:2 f.). It is couched in the most august and solemn language, denoting emphatically an epoch in the career of Jesus.

The language in which the exaltation is expressed implies that Jesus is to rest and enjoy the fruit of his labors for the salvation of men. He has finished his labors and has entered upon the state of personal and official perfection (2:10; 5:8). He has entered into the *sabbatismos* for the people of God (4:9). And the notion of rest is extended to denote that Jesus is to wait expectant until God shall have subdued all his enemies beneath his feet (1:13; 10:13). Who or what these enemies were the writer does not say, unless he includes among them death and the devil (2:14).[2] He may be assumed to include further all the forces

[1] There is no direct evidence of this, but there are some hints that point toward such a view. It would not be out of accord with his Platonic tendency and would explain the peculiar way in which he speaks of the incarnation of Jesus. This is the view of the writer of the Wisdom of Solomon with which Hebrews has some affinity (Wisd. 8:19, 20; 7:1 f.).

[2] Cf. Wisd. 2:23, 24.

among men and in the universe that make for wickedness and thwart the realization of the perfect messianic kingdom. But the Son himself is not active in the subduing of these enemies. God is to make them the footstool of his feet (1:13*b*). This emphasizes the subordination of Jesus to God, even in the period of the exaltation of Jesus. In Paul Jesus is represented as in charge of the government of the world and of the kingdom, which government he finally surrenders to God. In Hebrews God never surrenders his unique and supreme place.

It is rather difficult to interpret the idea of rest involved in the writer's language expressing the exaltation. But it must not be so interpreted as to make the exalted Christ inactive. It is probable that the writer conceives the cosmic activity of the pre-existent period (1:2, 3) to be continuous throughout the time subsequent to exaltation. But his thought is not directed primarily to the cosmic relations or activities of Christ. The emphasis of the writer is soteriological. Christ is active in the time subsequent to exaltation, but it is an activity that is related to salvation and has as its object and goal the realization of perfect salvation in the messianic kingdom (9:28). This will be inaugurated at the second coming. In the meantime Christ is active as High Priest in the heavenly tabernacle in the very presence of God (5:9; 6:20; 7:24, 25). The modern mind finds it hard to conceive of this heavenly activity in any definite way. The writer of Hebrews, in true Platonic fashion, considered the heavenly the real (9:23, 24). He conceived the unseen activity of Christ in the heavenly tabernacle as exerting a real influence on God and on men. It saved men, purifying and sanctifying them (5:9; 9:14; 10:19 f.), and it restrained the righteous wrath of God (12:29).

All this High-Priestly activity is transcendent. It belongs to a being that is transcendent, that is more than man, for it is directed to the saving of men. Christ is a mediator between God and men since he is the mediator (12:24) and surety of the new covenant (7:22). No high priest of the old covenant, indeed no human being as such, could perform this office of savior (2:16, 17). It was performed in a transcendent sphere and required a transcendent being.

In regard to the activity and position of Christ in the second stage of the exaltation period, the perfected messianic age, the writer is still more reticent. The voice of God that once shook the earth only will again shake both earth and heaven so that the things that are made shall be shaken and pass away and only the unseen realities shall remain (1:10–12; 12:26 f.). He identifies Christianity with this kingdom of

abiding reality that cannot be changed. This is probably a Christianized form of the Platonic and Philonic contrast of the intelligible and the tangible worlds, the *κόσμος νοητός* and the *κόσμος αἰσθητός*. Angels in one place (1:7*b*) are spoken of as if they might be among those beings that would pass away. In another place (12:22*b*) they are associated with the kingdom of abiding reality. As to what would happen ultimately to men in general and to spirit-beings at this great metathesis the writer apparently did not think definitely; or if he did, he did not express himself in this epistle. He declares unequivocally that Christ is eternal and does not pass away with the worlds which he has made (1:12). And he probably holds to the immortality through Christ of Christians, but his thought does not pursue this topic. The writer does not complete his picture of the perfected messianic kingdom with material gathered from apocalyptical sources, as the writer of Revelation does. He prefers to leave details of the eternal kingdom to reverent imagination. He is content to emphasize the abiding reality, the eternity of Christ and his kingdom.

The language which expresses the exaltation of Jesus denotes further the unique place which Jesus holds in the world of beings in relation to God. There is only one place in all the universe that can be described as at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and Jesus holds that place. He is the eternal vicegerent of God. It is the place of supremacy, the place of power. It is not God's place, yet it is the unique place of power and honor next to God.

But what may be called a higher degree of transcendency in the writer's conception of Jesus is manifested in what the writer says of him in the first period. This is expressed most fully in the words of the introduction (1:2, 3). Christ is the agent of creation and the support of the worlds which under God he has created. This conception of the cosmic significance of Christ is not found in the Christology of the primitive church, but is quite characteristic of the later New Testament view. In Hebrews at least it is a corollary of the writer's Platonic and Philonic doctrine. God is too august, too pure and holy to have direct, unmediated contact with the world of tangible things. He is concerned rather with the intelligible world of eternal realities (9:23, 24; 12:22, 27). To be sure, the author does not hold this philosophic idea in the outspoken, unrelieved form in which Philo holds it. It is considerably modified by the writer's emphasis on the Christian element, so that the philosophic idea lies latent. But there can hardly be any doubt that for Christians in general, and for the writer of

Hebrews in particular, the way to the thought of Christ as the agent of creation was paved by the philosophic idea that God was too holy and transcendent to be brought into direct contact with the material world. At the time of the writing of Hebrews this idea in a more or less definite form was the common property of the literature of the nations. But it was particularly prominent in Philo. Met by the Christian faith in the Messiahship of Jesus and the Christian consciousness of his religious supremacy and uniqueness, it produced in modified and more sober form the common Christian tenet that Christ was the agent and support of creation.

This however hardly carries the transcendent element in the conception of Christ beyond that which is implied in his being seated at the right hand of God at his exaltation. Both imply only a secondary divinity. Christ is in a sense on a par with angels as being with them a spirit-being (1:4, 9*b*). He has become better than they by that which he has experienced and accomplished on earth (1:3, 4), so that after his exaltation, when he comes again into the world, the angels, who formerly were in a sense his companions (1:9*b*), must worship him (1:6).

The striking words of 1:3*a* decidedly enhance the transcendent element. They may indicate, probably do indicate, that the writer with more or less philosophical feeling and thought transferred these words from the Logos and Wisdom to Christ.[1] One must beware of making logical and metaphysical inferences from these terms.[2] For, in addition to a measure of uncertainty as to their precise meaning, they are at bottom metaphorical. They are terms that strike the imagination. The writer was reaching after the highest terms within his knowledge to express the supreme significance of Christ and his unique relation to God without actually identifying him with God. These terms enhance the transcendent element in the person of Christ but cannot with certainty be considered to carry it into the realm of the essentially divine. They say nothing about the essential nature of Christ.

The titles, with the possible exception of ὁ υἱός and ὁ πρωτότοκος, say nothing about the essential nature of Christ. The title ὁ πρωτότοκος is practically equal to ὁ υἱός, denoting a unique relation to God implying pre-existence and priority in pre-existence. It need not of itself denote essential relationship to God, but may denote an ethical relationship of honor, responsibility, love, and devotion, such as a

[1] Philo, *De opif. mundi*, sec. 51, p. 33*D*; Wisd. 7:26.

[2] E. Ménégoz, *La théologie de l'epître aux Hébreux*, p. 78.

firstborn holds in the house of his father. It is more likely however that, like the terms in 1:3*a*, it denotes some sort of actual, that is, essential relation to God, a relation which is not explicitly defined but which falls short of identity.

The title "Son" is more frequent and more august, but it is a question whether it carries anything stronger or more definite in essential relationship than "firstborn." The title Son is used of Jesus both in the earthly period and in the period of exaltation. It is not certainly used of him in the pre-existent period, though the writer might very easily have so used it as, for instance, if he had said in 10:5, "Wherefore when [the Son] cometh into the world, he saith," etc. There are various other ways by which the author, if he had so desired, might have made it unambiguous that he considered Christ as Son of God in the pre-existent state, that is as eternally Son. And it is not possible to deny on the basis of the epistle that the writer did so consider Christ as eternally the Son of God. It is altogether probable that he did. He uses the term as one familiar to himself and his readers, and so familiar that it needed no explanation. If he conceived the relationship of Son as eternal, he still furnishes no means whatsoever of apprehending the *modus operandi* of that relationship. His thought was not turned in that direction.

But the adoptive meaning of the language used in regard to Sonship, the fact that in no instance does he unambiguously use the term Son of Christ as pre-existent, the fact that he seems to guard the subordination of Christ to God even when he speaks of Christ in the highest terms—all these as well as other indications go to show that the writer probably marked a transition from an earlier christological view which his adoptive language fitted to a later and more advanced view for the expression of which there was no fitting terminology. He therefore used his Alexandrian terminology notably in 1:3*a*, and this terminology soon became used to express a view still further advanced than that of the writer. But this terminology even as meant by the writer expressed an advanced view inconsistent with the view expressed by the adoptive terminology. Probably the writer understood the Sonship as eternal, probably as in some sense essential. But the writer did not advance to the idea of an essential divinity of the Son in the sense of identity with God. That was left for his successors. He approached so closely however to the more advanced view that he has generally been credited with holding it. As Ménégoz says, it is "une illusion d'optique."[1]

[1] Ménégoz, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

SUMMARY

To sum up in brief the writer's view of the person of Jesus: The writer holds that this being whose earthly name was Jesus was a supreme spirit-being who had lived and worked before his appearance in time. During this pre-existent period this being was comparable to the angels, but at the same time stood in a unique relation to God[1] as compared with other spirit-beings including angels (1:3*a*, 6). He performed works which no other spirit-beings performed, both in relation to the world (1:2*b*, 10) and to men (5:9). By an *ex post facto* method of thought he is implicitly credited with a special relationship to men even in the pre-existent period (2:11). This undefined relationship to men issues in his becoming man, taking bodily form that in accordance with the will of God he might become an efficient Savior and a sympathetic High Priest on men's behalf. This earthly period was a period of comparative humiliation, a period during which he was inferior to the angels to whom before he had been in a measure superior. But this time of temporary humiliation and suffering issues in sinless perfection, both personal and official, and finally, after the voluntary sacrificial death which secures forgiveness, brings communion with God, and perfect salvation, in exaltation. Because he has accomplished through suffering this great end of perfect salvation for men, he is raised to greater than his former glory. He is exalted at the right hand of God, the supreme place of honor and power. Here in the heavenly tabernacle he exercises his office as Savior and High Priest, until finally he shall come again to usher in the messianic age of perfect salvation. But all these activities are carried on in subordination to God "for whom are all things and through whom are all things." God is supreme over all.

In commenting on the blending or balance of the human and transcendent elements in the picture of the Christ, it may be said again that the human elements are genuine. It is true that the writer uses only those elements which bear upon the great purpose that he assigns to Christ, the salvation of men. But within these bounds the writer presents a sober picture of human development such that one instinctively feels that it is not artificial but genuine.

And in spite of much to the contrary, much that renders plausible the thought that the supernatural in the crude sense, the bizarre, is the emphatic thing with the author—in spite of this it is true that the taproot of his presentation is the life and death of the human person

[1] Heb. 1:3*a*, 6. Jesus was "firstborn" in relation to angels as the angels were in relation to men (12:23).

Jesus interpreted primarily through his own experience of salvation and his knowledge of the similar experiences of his fellows.[1] But this knowledge and experience of the benefits that flowed directly or indirectly from Jesus justified the author, in his own mind at least, in accepting the interpretation of his fellow-Christians that this Jesus was the Messiah, that he was risen from the dead, that he was divine and pre-existent, and that he would come again. This experience of the benefits springing from faith in Jesus justified him also in adding many peculiar elements from his own Alexandrian training. Such may have been the doctrine that Jesus was the Logos, that he was the agent of God in creation and revelation, that he was the mediator of a new covenant, that he was High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, that he ministered in the real tabernacle in heaven, etc. These inferences may not all be acceptable to the modern mind. They belong, many of them at least, to a particular philosophy and world-view that is past. They give a kaleidoscopic picture of Jesus that could hardly be free from inconsistencies and incongruities. Such, for instance, are the representations of Jesus as speaking when he is about to come into the world (2:12; 10:5), the language that denotes an inception of the Sonship and Priesthood (5:5, 6), the implication that Jesus was one with believing men before he came to earth (2:11), his relation to the angels (1:4, 6), cleansing of the things in the heavens with his blood (9:23), and many other ideas which time may prove to be transitory and untenable.

But there may have been in the writer's own mind a consciousness that part of this was realistic poetic symbolism. And even if this was not so, it must be admitted that these peculiar features were only the philosophic molds into which the author poured the full content of his rich religious experience.

[1] McGiffert, *Apostolic Age*, p. 477: "It was thus the humanity, and not the divinity or pre-existence of Christ, which chiefly concerns our author." This contrast, though fundamentally true, is put too sharply to be the best representation of the author of the epistle.

IV. SOURCES AND RELATIONS OF THE THOUGHT OF THE EPISTLE

1. SOURCES AND RELATIONS OF THE GENERAL DOCTRINE

1. CLASSIC JUDAISM

The fundamentally Jewish basis of the Epistle to the Hebrews is easily recognized without going to the extreme of inferring that the readers were exclusively Jews or that the epistle must have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and the consequent cessation of the Temple ritual. As already remarked, the fundament of the epistle is rather the ritual of classic Judaism blended with ideas from later apocalyptic Judaism. The God of the Epistle to the Hebrews is the Jehovah of the Old Testament who spoke in the prophets to the fathers (1:2) and presided over all the fortunes of the ancient people (4:2 ff.; chap. 11). He is a consuming fire (12:29). The whole ritual and law used as illustration by the writer is clearly that of the Old Testament. The priesthood is the Levitical priesthood with the variety of thoughts associated therewith—the thought of the sympathy of the high priest as being weak and requiring to offer for himself as well as for the people (5:1 f.), the idea that the high priest is not self-appointed (5:4) but called of God, the idea of purification (1:3 and *passim*), the idea of God's mediating by an oath as in the case of Abraham (6:13 f.; 7:28 f.), the idea of hearts sprinkled from a wicked conscience and bodies washed with pure water (10:22). There is also the idea of the new covenant taken over from the prophet Jeremiah (8:8 f.). The whole picture of Melchizedek, though painted with Alexandrian colors, has its roots in the Old Testament story (5:11 f.). Though much might be added, this point need not be labored further. It is quite plain that the author of Hebrews was steeped in Old Testament literature and religious ideas.

2. LATER JUDAISM AND PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY

But the writer has added ideas from later apocalyptic Judaism and from primitive Jewish Christianity. From later Judaism the writer has the idea of the two ages (9:26), the idea of a future judgment (9:27; 10:30 f. 12:23;), and the idea of a renovated earth as the theater of the future messianic age (2:5; 12:26). The slight emphasis however upon apocalyptic and eschatological ideas is quite noteworthy. The renovation or regeneration is not limited to the earth, as in

Psalms of Solomon, but involves heaven as well as earth, the universe of things (12:26). This conception is based very distinctly and precisely upon Old Testament prophecy (Hag. 2:6), but is given a characteristic turn by reference to created things which are to be shaken loose from the things that remain, leaving only the kingdom of abiding reality which is the goal and prize of the believer's faith. This is a characteristic combination of the apocalyptic view of later Judaism and primitive Christianity with the Alexandrian conception of the invisible world of abiding reality which is in its turn identified with the τὰ γενόμενα ἀγαθά (9:11) of Christian faith. It may be noted here that the present tenses of 12:28 harmonize well with the idea of a present participation of and activity in that kingdom whose full revelation is still future. From later Judaism the writer has also his doctrine of angels (1:4; 2:5; 12:22; 13:2), though his peculiar use and emphasis of it may be due to other influences; his emphasis upon the thought that the Old Testament law was given by angels (2:2); and the idea, similar to that of Philo, that God or the Holy Spirit was speaking in all the words and ceremonies of the Old Testament (9:8).

More directly from the Christian community and their tradition, primitive or Pauline, the writer has the doctrine of Jesus as the Messiah, Son of God, as pre-existent, humiliated during the days of his flesh but as raised by God and exalted at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens till all his enemies shall have been subdued, but coming again presumably for the complete inauguration of the messianic kingdom, though the writer does not make his thought definite in this respect. He has the idea also of distributions of the Holy Spirit (2:4), that God was in all the marvelous signs and works of the postresurrection period (2:4). From the tradition of the church the writer has also the thought of Jesus' being of the tribe of Judah (7:14), of his supplicating with tears and strong crying for release from death (5:7). From the early church he has his views of catechetical doctrine, which he calls the doctrine of the beginning of the Christ (6:1), the elements of the beginning of the doctrines of God (5:12), viz., repentance, faith in God, the teaching of baptisms, the laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. The eschatological views of the writer already referred to which have their roots in Judaism are modified by the thought of the Christian church in their application to the historical Jesus as the Messiah. If the writer has received from primitive Christianity the suggestion of his great thesis that Jesus is the mediator of a new covenant, and at the same time its great High Priest and final and sufficient

sacrifice (9:26, 28), who has entered into the true holy place to appear before God on behalf of believers, he has at any rate given it an entirely original application and development. With Paul the writer has the idea of the glory and honor of Jesus in his exaltation as the reward of the suffering of death (12:2; cf. Phil. 2:9). The thought that believers are partakers of a heavenly calling is comparable to that of Paul (I Cor. 1:26). So also is his idea that the Old Testament law, the foregoing commandment (7:18), is set aside because of its weakness (Gal. 3:21); but his method is still quite distinct and original. He conceives of the old as shadow and the new as substance, the familiar Alexandrian contrast. Paul does not use this category. Paul thinks of the law as a tutor to lead to Christ by stressing the human consciousness of sinfulness and weakness. Paul's conception is rather doctrinal and ethical: that of the author of Hebrews is rather ritualistic and religious.

3. ALEXANDRIANISM

This dependence of the author of Hebrews upon the classic Judaism of the Old Testament and upon later Judaism and upon primitive Christianity is strongly colored and modified by his relation to Alexandrian thought. From this source mainly he has his idea of Christ as the Logos (though he does not apply the term to him) and as Creator and Supporter of the world (1:2), as the image and representative of God (1:3), possibly as a second God (1:8). He has the idea of inspiration developed among Alexandrian Jews according to which not the actual writers but God (1:1 f.; 5:5; 8:8, 13) or Christ (10:5) or the Holy Spirit (3:7; 10:15) or "some one" (2:6)—a method of citation indefinite because God himself really speaks in all the Scripture—speaks in the prophets and in a Son (1:2). God is for the author of Hebrews the father of spirits, not a merely technical or philosophical designation, but one that has a certain warmth and beauty of religious feeling about it (12:9*b*). This is a characteristic Alexandrian thought.[1] So is the thought of suffering as the chastening of God.[2] The peculiar use which the author of Hebrews makes of the weird figure of Melchizedek is Alexandrian in its exegesis and in its whole thought and atmosphere. The thought of the High-Priesthood, while essentially that of the Old Testament with its emphasis on ritual, is yet touched with the more refined, mystical, abstract conception of Philo's thought. The thought of heaven as being the true Sanctuary as opposed to the sanctuary of this world which is but the copy and shadow of the heavenly is of course thoroughly Alexandrian (8:5). The

[1] Wisd. 11:26.

[2] Wisd. 3:5, 6.

Alexandrian attitude and tendency of the author is evident in his method of exegesis, in his description of the word of God (4:12), in the terms which he applies and the functions which he assigns to Christ (1:2 f.), in his identification of Christianity with the Philonic archetypal world of invisible reality.

4. ORIENTAL MYSTERY-RELIGIONS

But though it is patent on every page of Hebrews that the Old Testament and the primitive Christian community including Paul provide the substance, while the form or mold in the main is Alexandrian—yet one is occasionally conscious of a certain peculiar strain, an unusual emphasis, a peculiar atmosphere that does not properly belong to the above sources. The explanation of this is to be found in large part, no doubt, in the striking originality of the writer. To this factor is to be assigned the whole point of view and attack, as well as many separate thoughts.

Leaving, however, the original element for later consideration, the variation from the above-named three sources is to be accounted for by a certain tinge from the oriental mystery-religions of the time. In the first place, the writer's whole method of presentation is in all probability determined by his knowledge of and a certain sympathy with the rites of the Hellenistic mystery-religions. It has already been noted that the writer's thought does not revolve about the temple in Jerusalem and its services, but about the tabernacle of the Old Testament. It is to a certain extent academic. But no man is wholly academic—certainly the writer to the Hebrews is only partly so. He is in close touch with his people, intensely hortatory and practical. He was writing considerably after the fall of Jerusalem when the sacrifices of the temple ceased (70 A.D.), but he was not writing to a people—gentiles though they probably were—who were unfamiliar with such rites or familiar with them only in Old Testament forms. Both he and they were familiar with variant forms of that ritual on every side about them. The ritual of sacrifice, purification, and baptisms was dead at Jerusalem, but not at Rome or in the place whatever it may have been to which this epistle was sent.[1] To be sure, the whole setting and presentation of the ritual is that of the Old Testament with the Jewish high priest serving in the tabernacle. But in its application to Jesus as the great High Priest it reveals certain influences from the syncretistic mystery-religions of the time. Still more emphatically one may say that this presentation of the Christian salvation under the high-priestly category would exhibit

[1] Cf. Cumont, *Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism.*

many features thoroughly familiar to the devotees of the varied oriental cults.

In spite of some uncertainty, it is possible to enumerate at least many of the touches that seem to be more noticeable. With an emphasis and definiteness unknown to the Old Testament, the writer of Hebrews declares that "perfection" was the aim of the Levitical law and ritual, an aim which it did not and could not attain but which was attained finally and perfectly by the new law and voluntary sacrifice of Jesus as High Priest. Both the conception of and the emphasis upon "perfection" is, I think, indirectly the result of the influence of the mystery-religions. Mithraism, the greatest rival of Christianity for some centuries, was most intent on securing purification and perfection in a very deep moral and spiritual sense[1] by various rites of washing, etc., and all the other mystery-religions had similar rites with a similar aim. The idea that sanctification (ἁγιασμός, 12:14) is necessary in order to see the Lord is even for our writer himself tinged with the gnostic idea of the mystery-religions. His description of the worshipers who are to approach the holy place with hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and their bodies washed with pure water keeps strictly neither to Old Testament nor to New Testament phraseology, but bears the marks of the mystery-religions.

The emphasis of the writer upon "salvation" has its counterpart in the mystery-religions.[2] It is not meant that the writer took his conception directly from the mystery-religions. The idea of salvation, of a future salvation, of an eternal salvation secured by participation in some form of the divine life and of the God was widespread, but it had become widespread through the influence of the thought of mystery-religions. Mithra was the Savior-God. Isis gave to her votaries the gift of salvation, which was a new life after a figurative death, a new life which would be enjoyed to the full after death.[3] The salvation of the mystery-cults was an eternal salvation. In all this, as will be readily felt, the thought of the mystery-religions has worked indirectly but perceptibly upon the writer of Hebrews. Jesus Christ has become, after suffering death and after resurrection to a new eternal, indissoluble life, the cause of eternal salvation to all those who obey him (5:9). Jesus is σωτήρ,

[1] Farnell, *Evolution of Religion*, p. 127; Cumont, *Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism*, pp. 154 f.

[2] Cf. Lietzmann, *Der Weltheiland*.

[3] Reitzenstein, *Die hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen*, S. 25 f.

"Savior," as were the deities of the various oriental cults. The vision of God is "salvation" (11:27; 12:14).[1]

And not only in the peculiar emphasis upon and atmosphere about the concept of salvation (*σωτηρία*), but also in the significance of the term, is the influence of the Gnosticism of the oriental religions discernible. As is well known, these Gnostic cults amid their many variations agree in ringing the changes upon life, light, and *gnosis* or knowledge. In this, according to them, consists salvation, in contrast with the primitive Christian community where salvation meant rather forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33; 2:38, 47), secured upon repentance (Acts 3:19 f.) and faith in Jesus Christ as risen Messiah and Lord (Acts 3:26; 4:2). The Pauline conception of salvation reaches to more profound and mystical depths, and by so much approaches the conception of salvation held by the oriental cults. Paul's own salvation was due to a superhuman enlightenment. But though Paul manifests the influence of Gnosticism, he does not conform his conception of salvation to that of the gnostic sects. The Pauline salvation is a justification by faith involving forgiveness of sins, release of the conscience from the sense and burden of guilt, right relations with God, and a new power of life generated by the mystical indwelling of Christ by faith. The Pauline thought, while touched with Gnosticism, is rather mystical in an independent, original manner. The writer to the Hebrews is less mystical, but has more approach to the oriental cults in his technical descriptions of salvation and conversion. With him conversion is an enlightenment (10:32), as with Paul (II Cor. 4:6), and that too, a single (*ἅπαξ*) enlightenment. *φωτίζειν* is the technical word of the oriental cults.[2] The Epistle to the Hebrews makes very little reference to what is now called conversion, as it is directed forward rather than backward; it is theological rather than historical. But this reference (10:32) which it makes is decidedly gnostic. So too is the phrase of 10:26, also descriptive of conversion, viz., "After that we have received the knowledge of the truth." Perhaps the peculiar use of the term "word of hearing" (4:2), as used by this Jewish-Christian writer, manifests a touch of influence of the mysteries. Indeed the writer casts a strange halo about the function of hearing. He idealizes

[1] Cf. Reitzenstein, *op. cit.*, S. 39 f.; also S. 25: "Ob unsere theologischen Erklärungen des *σωτήρ*-Begriffes nicht gut täten, letztere Bedeutung auch in den Kultbezeichnungen salutaris dea, *Ἶσις σώτειρα*, *Σάραπις σωτήρ* ein wenig mehr zu betonen?" Cf. also Apuleius, and Lietzmann, *Der Weltheiland*.

[2] Reitzenstein, *Die hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen*, S. 119.

it in the case both of Jesus and the disciples (2:3) and of the ancient Israelites (4:2). The oriental religions, especially in their earlier stages of development, made much of the sacred office of "hearing." To "hear" the word of the God was to receive his power and his inbreathing, his πνεῦμα.[1] In the thought of the mysteries hearing was sufficient, faith was not required. But in the thought of the writer to the Hebrews, the ancient Israelites failed to enter into the promised rest because their hearing was not united with faith.

There are still other touches of the mystery-religions in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The writer's conception of faith differs somewhat from that of Judaism, that of the primitive Christian church, and that of Paul. It approaches the conception of the mystery-religions. It is intuitive and philosophical rather than personal and ethical as with the Jews and the primitive Christian church, or personal, ethical, and mystical as with Paul. In this epistle the view of faith, particularly as presented in the eleventh chapter, reckons doctrinal content as comparatively secondary. Insight, the vision power, is the important thing, the realization of things unseen. Faith is seeing the invisible God (11:1; 11:27*b*[2]), which is a very close approach to the *gnosis* of the mystery-religions. It is probably under the influence of these mystery-religions that our author gives this particular turn to faith.[3] This conception is a powerful one, however, not for what it is in itself, but for its power of reflex action. It is a giving substance to things that are as yet but hoped for, and therefore a putting to the test of things unseen (11:1). Closely related to this conception of faith is the writer's emphasis on hope; this may also be a touch from the Hellenistic mysteries, which greatly emphasized hope.

In all probability the peculiar emphasis of our writer upon the place and function of angels is due to the influence of the mystery-religions. The roots of the doctrine of angels go back to early Semitic teaching. They bear their fruit in the emphasis upon angels in the Old Testament. Further development is found in the figurative, philosophical interpretations of Philo with regard to the angels. But Philo is not to be credited with all the development in this direction which he manifests. The

[1] Cf. Gal. 3:2, "received ye the spirit from the works of the law or from the hearing of faith," ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως; Reitzenstein, *op. cit.*, S. 138. A somewhat similar use of the word ἀκοή is found in *Corp. Herm.*, XIII, 17, quoted by Reitzenstein: πᾶσα φύσις κόσμου προσδεχέσθω τοῦ ὑμνοῦ τὴν ἀκοήν.

[2] Reitzenstein, *Poimandres*, S. 12; cf. Heb. 11:27.

[3] Reitzenstein, *op. cit.*, S. 85, note: τὸ γὰρ νοῆσαι ἐστὶ τὸ πιστεῦσαι.

emphasis on angels is a mark of the syncretistic religious development of his day. Many of the mystery-religions made much of the place and functions of minor gods often called angels or powers.[1] This was especially true of the more pronouncedly dualistic religions, such as that of Mithra, which was compounded with a strong Persian element. Here there were demons under Ahriman arrayed against the good angels who were the celestial spirits, the messengers of Ahura-Mazda.[2] That there was any direct contact between Mithraism and the Epistle to the Hebrews it would be hazardous to state, but there may very well have been contact with common origins in the syncretistic religions of the day. The writer makes much of angels. They are God's ministers sent forth to do service for those who are to inherit salvation (1:14). In all probability the general assembly and gathering of the firstborn enrolled in heaven is the myriads of angels (12:23). This does not sound like Old Testament, primitive Christian, or Pauline doctrine, but is not on that account to be rejected.[3] This peculiar importance attached to angels is probably mediated by the syncretistic religions of the day, which made so much of celestial spirits, angels, powers, deities, and demons.[4] But though the author gives an exalted position to angels, it is not at the expense of the position of Christ. Many of the oriental syncretistic religions gave high places and great powers to these subordinate deities and celestial beings, as is evidenced from the gnostic systems into which they developed. The circles to whom the writer to the Hebrews wrote were yielding to the tendency to exalt angels unduly. Consequently at the very beginning of his remarkable epistle the writer claims the supreme place and the supreme name for the "Son" (1:4 f.), adding that to Jesus and not to angels did God subject the coming age, the perfect world that was to be, the subject of his discourse (2:5). In the Hermetic literature the same Greek word is used in the passive, expressing the subjection of the world to Hermes.[5] Such thoughts as these led the author of this Epistle to give the supreme place in the world to come to Jesus who alone was worthy of it.[6]

Is it possible that the impulse to the rich and original thought of the sequel of this passage (2:5 f.), particularly of 2:10 f., should have come

[1] Plutarch, *De Isis et Osiris*, 30.

[2] Cumont, *Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism*, pp. 152, 158.

[3] Cf. A. B. Davidson, *Hebrews*, *ad loc.*

[4] Plutarch, *De defectu orac.*, 10, p. 415*A*.

[5] Reitzenstein, *Poimandres*, S. 23: διὸ καὶ πάντα ὑποτέτακταί σοι; cf. Heb. 10:13.

[6] Cumont, *Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism*, p. 266, n. 38.

from the oriental cults? The picture is that of a man taken from the midst of his companions, his brethren (2:11 f.), charged by God with the responsibility of leading his brethren to salvation and glory, and for this cause becoming identified with them, vanquishing death and delivering them from their lifelong bondage to death (2:14 f.).[1] These are the main outlines of the Redeemer of the various mystery-religions, and especially that of Mithra, which apparently was very militant and withal very democratic. The situation reminds one also of the deliverance of Alcestis from death by Heracles. Jesus became like his brethren that through death he might bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (2:14 f.). Mithra was such a redeemer on behalf of men. He was the captain and leader of the soldiers, one of their company and in sympathy with them, the strong companion of souls in their trials and struggles (2:17, 18). Like Jesus, Mithra brought the souls of those who took the oath of loyalty to him out of the darkness into the supernal light of the upper heaven (cf. Heb. 4:14 f.; 7:26 f.; 9:11 f., 24, 28). The emphasis upon devotion, loyalty, faithfulness, the necessity of perseverance, the virile qualities so characteristic of Hebrews, was characteristic of the Mithra cult.[2] Mithra was perfected, "sanctus";[3] so was Jesus. Mithra led the way of souls into the upper regions of light. Hermes also was the guide or attendant of souls.[4] So Jesus is the forerunner of believers, entering for them into the very inner shrine, the true sanctuary, where dwells the divine presence, and thus opening up for his followers also a new and living way of access into the divine presence (4:14; 6:20; 9:11 f.). Mithra is μεσίτης;[5] so is Jesus. Do not both the ideas and the terminology here show traces of the mystery-cults? Mithra, Isis, Osiris, Adonis are all men who are represented as vanquishing death in personal victory. They died and rose as gods. Immortality and divinity are to be gained by union with them (cf. 3:14; 5:9; 7:16). Perhaps the extremely somber tinge in Hebrews has some relation to the similar feeling of awe that attended the mystery-cults.

There is a striking parallel drawn between Moses and Jesus in their relation to the house of God, showing the superiority of Jesus (3:2 f.).

[1] Cumont, *op. cit.*, p. 153*b*.

[2] Cumont, *op. cit.*, pp. 153, 156 f.

[3] Cumont, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

[4] Reitzenstein, *Poimandres*, S. 23*b*: "Die Tätigkeit dieses Hermes ist nach der von Dieterich herausgegebenen Theogonie das ὁδηγεῖν der Seele."

[5] Plutarch, *De Isis et Osiris*, 46; cf. Gruppe, *Griech. Mythologie*, S. 159.

In this passage the phrase οἶκος τοῦ θεοῦ is used in an unusual manner, equivalent to "household" and denoting Christian believers (3:6). An approach to this peculiar use is quoted by Reitzenstein.[1] To Heb. 2:10, "For whom are all things and through whom are all things," there is found a close parallel in the mystery-religions as given by Berthelot,[2] ἐν τὸ πᾶν καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ τὸ πᾶν καὶ εἰς αὐτὸ τὸ πᾶν (cf. Rom. 11:36).

There are still many similarities in Hebrews as compared with the mystery-cults. The *mystae* were called "brethren," and ἅγιοι,[3] and were considered as receiving a heavenly calling (3:1). The emphasis in the epistle upon the fact that Christ did not presume to take this high and holy office of Priesthood to himself but was called of God (5:4, 5) has its counterpart in the mystic cults.[4] The worthy worship of the mystic on seeing the vision of God and securing salvation is the song of praise (cf. 13:15). The mystic after his new birth is fed with milk until he is able to bear the deeper mysteries.[5] Among some of the deity worshipers of the mystery-cults the deity was θεὸς ὕψιστος (cf. Heb. 7:1). The thought of Jesus as the "great shepherd" may have its roots in the Hermetic literature of the mystery-religions, as is the case with John, chap. 10, the Shepherd of Hermas, and other Christian passages.[6]

There are other ideas in Hebrews which might suggest the influence of mystery-cults, but about which there must remain considerable uncertainty, at least in the present state of knowledge upon the subject. They may be mentioned briefly. The description of the word of God as living, active, etc., of 4:12; the thought of a general assembly and gathering in heaven, an assembly of spirit-beings of whom Jesus is one (12:23) having gone through the heavens (4:14; 7:26) may be paralleled by the ascension of Mithra and still more closely by that of Hermes[7] the Great who was exalted to the spirit world and classed among the number of the spirits. As to the deep conviction of the writer of Hebrews that the old priesthood and the old covenant have failed to meet the deep need of the conscience and therefore have passed away, because God who spoke formerly in the prophets has now spoken in a Son, Jesus,

[1] *Op. cit.*, S. 25: ὁ οἶκος τοῦ παντοκράτορος θεοῦ; cf. footnote 1.

[2] *Alchemistes grecs*, Introduction, S. 133.

[3] Reitzenstein, *op. cit.*, S. 27.

[4] *Ibid.*, S. 25*b*, 26*b*.

[5] *Ibid.*, S. 52, 53; cf. I Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:12.

[6] Reitzenstein, *op. cit.*, S. 34*b*, 35; also cf. *ibid.*, *Gebet*, VIII, IX, S. 31, n. 3.

[7] Reitzenstein, *op. cit.*, S. 171 and n. 3.

may this profound thought, with its roots in the Melchizedek-story of the Old Testament and in Jeremiah, have had its counterpart in the idea of the mystery-religions that if God spoke to an individual consecrated to himself, that word, that revelation superseded the earlier?[1]

Summary.—This presentation is by no means complete. The aim has simply been to show that there is some influence from the mystery-religions of the time upon the Epistle to the Hebrews—more than has been recognized. Indeed it would be hazardous at this stage of the historical study of the relation of primitive Christianity to the Hellenistic mystery-religions to say with precision just how much from the mystery-religions is found in any of the New Testament books—even in that one in which the mystery-element is most easily detected, the Fourth Gospel. It can only be said of the New Testament as a whole, as has been said just above of this epistle, that the element from the mystery-religions is larger than has been generally recognized.

With still less certainty can the exact nature and sources of this relationship be stated. In the case of the Epistle to the Hebrews at least, it is clear that classic Judaism as seen in the Old Testament, Alexandrianism, and primitive Christianity including Paulinism, form the three main strands. But it is to be noted that in all probability Alexandrianism, whose influence in the book is clear and has been emphasized, is not nearly so much of a unit as has hitherto been thought. It (and particularly Philo and the Wisdom of Solomon) has been more strongly charged with the mystery element of the syncretism of the day than we have supposed. In any case it is hoped it will be clear from the above that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews was neither a man who interpreted and presented Christianity from the current Judaism of his day as it was carried out in rite and ceremony, nor on the other hand was he an academic recluse who viewed the ancient tabernacle afar off and theorized upon it. It may be added that he was not fundamentally ethical and eschatological as were the synoptists, not profoundly ethical, philosophical, and mystical as was Paul, nor yet so non-eschatological, philosophical, and mystical as the author of the Fourth Gospel. He was a cultured, earnest man (probably a Jew of the Dispersion) who felt within himself the deep need for a redemption (9:12), a purification (9:14), and a salvation (7:25) which would be satisfactory and final, for both the present and the future. Like Paul, he felt the whole creation groaning and travailing together, and longed for a satisfactory deliverance. This he found secured for the present and the future in

[1] *Ibid.*, S. 18 f.

Jesus Christ, and sealed in his own personal experience, upon the testimony of those who had known and heard Jesus himself. When however he would express this experience, when he would expound the thought-relations of his new faith which, in its religious substance, he had received from the Christian tradition, he fell back instinctively upon the Jewish Scriptures and the Jewish ritual and law or covenant. As compared with Paul and the primitive Christian community, however, the writer of Hebrews makes much more of the Levitical ritual and particularly of the category of the high-priesthood and its sacrifices. The Christian tradition had indeed come to connect the forgiveness of sin at first with the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus (Acts 3:26; 5:31), and later with his crucifixion and death (Matt. 26:28). Paul also had made close connection between forgiveness and the death of Jesus (Rom. 4:25), and had even made an approach toward explaining the significance and work of Jesus by use of the Old Testament ritual (I Cor. 5:7). But it is to be noted that this reference to Christ as the Passover sacrifice is not employed by Paul to expound the significance of the death of Christ, but to point quite another lesson (I Cor. 5:8). It was left for the writer of the Hebrews to blaze the way toward a thorough exposition of the significance of Jesus and of primitive Christianity by reference to the Levitical priesthood and ritual of the Old Testament.

This frame of thought which our author uses for the exposition of his Christian experience secured through the Christian tradition is filled in, so to speak, under the immediate influence of two contemporaneous movements of thought, viz., Alexandrianism and the syncretism of the mystery-religions. As has been already noted, these two were not by any means wholly independent, for the latter had influenced the former. But practically they were two quite distinguishable streams of thought. The former gave to our author the great contrast of the *κόσμος νοητός* and the *κόσμος αἰσθητός*, which he uses with such splendid effect in the exposition of his Christian experience. Both Paul and our author had broken decisively with ancient Judaism in their thought of Christianity as an independent and final movement. But each is independent and different in his conception of the relation of the new to the old, or at least in his expression of that conception. With Paul the law (Paul puts no emphasis whatever on the ritual) was intercalated, temporary, and preparatory. The real thing both before and after the law was faith and the promises of God. The law was but a *paidagogos* to bring men to Christ (Gal. 3:7 f.). This was quite derogatory to the law, and it is not surprising that in the wake of Paul's view many extreme

heresies followed, subversive of elements of value in Judaism. Our author on the other hand views the law and the ritual as temporary and preparatory, but not as intercalated. The Alexandrian contrast is seized upon by our author. The law and its ritual is an adumbration only of the real thing, an imperfect copy of the heavenly antitype; it belongs to "this" world, the world of the visible and tangible. Jesus Christ and Christianity, on the other hand, in spite of a certain unsatisfactory indefiniteness, are meant evidently to be identified with the "other" world, with the world of heavenly realities, the world of the invisible and intangible. The Old Testament law and ritual were but shadow: Christianity is the substance. It would surely be ingratitude to complain of our author because he has still left Christianity bound up with a contrast, both of time and space, as E. F. Scott seems to do.[1] We ought to be thankful that he has set up the contrast which is bound to be permanent in some form in the Christian view and has identified Christianity with the other world of permanent realities. He could express his feeling of the contrast only in some one of the thought-forms of his day and he chose the Platonic-Philonic form because it came to him spontaneously and naturally as the best and richest medium of expression.

But the writer's frame of thought was filled out also from the syncretism of the mystery-religions of his day. This element may be comparatively small, but it is an influence that must be noted. That our writer emphasized the ritual while Paul spoke only of the law may be due to the contemporaneous influence of the rites and ceremonies of the mystery-cults. Their influence on his idea of the function of the angels, on his conception of faith, of revelation, of perfection, of conversion as enlightenment, of voluntary self-offering, as well as on many other conceptions of the writer, has been noticed. But the chief influence of the mystery-religions has been upon the writer's conception, or perhaps rather, description, of salvation and redemption and upon his picture of Jesus as the divine-human Redeemer. This influence is indirect, probably, and is shared by other Christian writers, e.g., Paul. But it is more marked in Hebrews than in Paul, inasmuch as Hebrews makes much more of the human element in Jesus than does Paul. With the author of Hebrews Jesus is pre-existent, to be sure, but yet a man who has struggled through opposition and suffering to personal perfection, who has fought his way to victory over death and him who has the power of death. He has done this as an earnest, God-fearing, devout man who

[1] *Apologetic of the New Testament*, pp. 202, 203.

has therefore, being called and exalted by God, become the Redeemer and Savior of men, having passed through the heavens and entered the inner sanctuary of God's presence. This picture of Jesus is modeled after the human redeemer of the mystery-religions much more than that of Paul is. It occurs at a more advanced stage. On the other hand, as compared with the Fourth Gospel, the influence of the mystery-religions is less and earlier. In Hebrews the influence of the mystery-religions is ritualistic and religious in its character. In the Fourth Gospel it has become decidedly philosophical. It is not philosophical in Hebrews. In fact, one might say that in the Fourth Gospel the influence is that of the later Gnosticism, not of the earlier mystery-religions. In the Fourth Gospel the picture of Christ is not at all that of the devout, faithful man struggling toward perfection and victory and so mediating salvation. He is a real man in theory, to be sure, as must be held against extreme Gnosticism, but he is actually and always the perfect divine form of the Son of God. It may of course be replied that he is really such in Hebrews also, and there is a certain degree of truth in the statement. But the emphasis is very much more upon the human side involving faithfulness, struggle, and development. This is evident from the very vivid and realistic picture of Jesus given in Heb. 5:7–10, a passage which bears marks of the influence of the mystery-religions with their pictures of the human-divine Redeemer.

5. PROBABLE ORIGINAL ELEMENTS

To return to the attempt to present the various strands of the writer's thought, it is necessary only to call attention finally to what seem in all probability to be the original thoughts of the writer. This is a rather difficult task. The original element in a writer will vary or even vanish according to the severity of the critic's judgment. The effort to trace genetic development is apt to eliminate the original element, with the result that no individual is original. Allowance must be made for difference of opinion. Strict and definite decisions are quite impossible, but the following is an attempt to set forth in a general and brief way the elements probably original in Hebrews.

As already noted, the effort to set forth the significance and superiority of Christ and Christianity by extended and detailed comparison with the Old Testament ritual and law is original with our writer. Very soon, indeed, after the resurrection of Jesus the Christians began to see in Jesus and the new movement the fulfilment of various Old Testament prophecies (Acts 1:20; 2:16f.; 4:25). This conviction entered the

earliest tradition (Mark 1:2–8; cf. Matt. 3:1–12; Luke 3:1–18), and is especially prominent in Matthew's Gospel. Paul had made much of the same thought (Rom. 1:2; 3:21; 16:26; Gal. 3:8, etc.). But no one makes the close connection which the writer of this epistle makes. No one had deliberately chosen the Old Testament ritual and law as the background against which to present in fulness of detail, partly as parallel, partly as contrast, the substance of the significance of Jesus Christ and the Christian system. This was original with the author of Hebrews.

Insight into the weakness and unsatisfactoriness of the Old Testament law and ritual was not original. Paul felt it in very much the same way (Gal. 3:21). But conceiving of the Old Testament law and ritual as shadow and identifying Christianity with the substance is original. A feeling of the necessity of sacrifice for the sake of forgiveness and inner moral harmony and victory is common to both Paul and our author, more profoundly felt by Paul but more expressly stated by Hebrews (9:22; 10:4). But our author is original in the clearness and definiteness with which he feels and states that the essence of the final religion, Christianity, consists in two things, viz., the forgiveness of sins implying a cleansing of the conscience on the one hand (9:14), and on the other communion with and devotion to the service of the living God, father of Jesus Christ (9:14; 10:19, *passim*). The writer feels that where this is attained, all rites and ceremonies are forthwith rendered useless and obsolete (10:18); so much so that he apparently has no place for the forgiveness of further sins (10:26 f.) as the Johannine author has (I John 1:7 f.). This view of salvation is not attended by an elaborate and profound theological system. It is original in its directness and simplicity. The attainment of this final goal of satisfactory religious experience is assigned, causally, wholly to the voluntary sacrifice of the perfected Christ (5:9; 10:19 f.), interpreted according to the ritual of Old Testament sacrifice. But it is very plain that the basal reality is the experience and not the interpretation.

The author is original in being the first to relate the new to the old as being both revelations of the one living God parallel to each other, though the revelation in the Son is supreme and final. It is noteworthy too that he compares the revelation in Jesus to the revelation in the prophets (1:1 f.).

There are many other comparatively minor elements which are peculiar to the author. Such, for example, are his line of argument showing Jesus Christ to be superior to the angels, to Moses, and to the

Levitical high priest, as well as his idea of the superiority of the new sacrifice and the new covenant; the idea of the perfecting of Jesus through suffering; the identification of Jesus as captain of salvation with the sons whom God is bringing unto glory, an identification complete in all respects excepting sin; the idea that Jesus is not ashamed to call these sons brethren; the idea of believers as God's house with Moses in it and Jesus over it, both alike faithful, the one as servant, the other as Son; the idea of a *sabbatismos* or spiritual rest with God; the idea of the impossibility of a second repentance, forgiveness, and restoration (6:6); the idea of "tasting," which is so frequent with the author, tasting of death (2:9), tasting of the heavenly gift, the good word of God, the powers of the age to come (6:4 f.); the idea of hope entering as an anchor into the inner sanctuary and steadying the soul (6:19); the idea of Jesus as a forerunner (6:20); the thought that Jesus is High Priest by oath of God (7:20); that Jesus is the surety of a better covenant (7:22); interpretation of the veil as indication of the thought that access into the fulness of God's presence was not yet secured (9:8); the idea that the veil is the flesh of Jesus (10:20) (this may turn out to be an idea from the mystery-religions); the repeated exhortation to patience, confidence, and obedience in order to secure the promise which still reaches into the future for the readers as it had for their fathers (10:39; 11:40); the idea of Jesus as the leader and perfecter of faith (12:2); the emphasis upon the greater danger, responsibility, and punishment of apostates (12:14 f.); upon the need of meeting together, confessing to the name of God, offering the sacrifice of praise, etc. (13:15).

II. SOURCES AND RELATIONS OF THE CHRISTOLOGICAL DOCTRINE, INCLUDING AN OUTLINE OF NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTOLOGY

1. CONSIDERATION OF PS. 2:7 AS USED IN HEB. 1:5 AND 5:5

In considering more precisely the sources and relations of the christological doctrine of the Epistle to the Hebrews the starting-point will be the passage already discussed with considerable fulness and found as a quotation from Ps. 2:7 in Heb. 1:5 and 5:5, viz., "Thou art my son, I today have begotten thee." This passage is quoted in the first case (1:5) as proving the superior dignity of the Son over that of the angels; in the second case (5:5) as constituting the call by God to the High-Priesthood. It has been shown above that this quotation is a remnant of the adoption Christology, probably the earliest form of Christology held by the primitive church (Acts 2:22, 36). It is not at all à propos of the situation in Hebrews, as the Christology of the writer of the

Epistle is certainly not the adoption Christology. Any literal and in fact any meaningful application of the phrase in the connection in Hebrews (1:5 and 5:5) is impossible. Where and when could and did the phrase have a proper meaning as applied to Jesus? The most satisfactory answer seems to be furnished by the words of Paul in his address in the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:33–39). It is true that this passage does not happen to fall within the earlier twelve chapters which clearly represent a primitive Christology. But a double answer to this objection may be made. First, the thought of the passage (Acts 13:33–39) is very closely paralleled by various passages in the earlier chapters (Acts 2:22–36; 3:18–26; 5:30–32), although the words from Ps. 2:7 are not quoted. Secondly, there are good reasons for believing that Luke is here in substance following good sources.[1] But this passage itself is ambiguous. The words "having raised up Jesus" of vs. 33 may refer to God's bringing Jesus into his active prophetic work of preaching and so be localized in the Baptism (cf. Acts 3:22; 13:22).[2] On the other hand it may refer to the Resurrection.[3] It would seem most probable that Chase's point is well taken in referring Acts 13:32 to the Baptism of Jesus and Acts 13:34 to the Resurrection, and in drawing a comparison with Rom. 1:4 where, by emphasizing the phrase "with power," a distinct though latent reference to the declaration of Sonship at the Baptism may be felt.

If this is so, then these two passages (Acts 13:32, 33 and Rom. 1:4) represent a stage of christological development with two prominent foci, viz., the Baptism and the Resurrection.[4] They are not mutually exclusive except to the severely logical. Both however were unsatisfactory declarations of Sonship as primitive Christian thought struggled in its polemic with Greek philosophy and the mystery-religions. A higher conception of Sonship must be developed, both to express the wonderful significance of Jesus as it dawned increasingly upon the early Christians and to cope adequately with the higher conceptions of the Graeco-Roman world of religious thought. The thought of the Resurrection in the Sonship of Jesus naturally became more prominent while the thought of the Baptism in connection with Sonship vanished. So the most plausible though not necessary references of the quotations of

[1] Chase, *The Credibility of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 179 f.; Harnack, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 195 f.

[2] So Chase, *op. cit.*, pp. 187 f.

[3] So H. J. Holtzmann, *Handcommentar zum N.T., ad loc.*

[4] Cf. Luke 3:22; D *et al.*

Ps. 2:7 in Hebrews (1:5; 5:5) is to the time of the Resurrection. For the early Christians the Resurrection was the more prominent, but their conception of Jesus' experience at the Baptism did not fail them. They were consistent adoptionists. With Paul the idea of Sonship by divine choice and descent of the spirit at the Baptism was latent and unemphasized, if present at all. With the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews the idea of Sonship at the Baptism was gone and the idea of Sonship by the Resurrection was latent and unemphasized. Both Paul and this writer had made far advance toward the higher category of essential Sonship implying pre-existence and some approach to Deity. In certain circles the inception of Sonship was pushed back to the very beginning of the earthly life and made dependent directly upon God himself (Matt. 1:18=Luke 1:35) and essential, not merely declarative or adoptive. The Fourth Gospel, as is well known, abolishes the thought of the inception of Sonship entirely. Jesus was the incarnation of the Logos, the word made flesh, the eternal Son of God.

2. JESUS' SELF-ESTIMATE

What was Jesus' own conception of his Sonship and of the Baptism experience in relation to it? The most varied answers are given to this question. On the one hand he is conceived as a thoroughgoing but sadly deluded eschatologist (Schweitzer); on the other, by clever critical cutting and slashing, every eschatological reference and thought is removed from him (Sharman). Again, by the orthodox view he is credited with a thought of himself as Son of God and Savior of men, such as Paul or the Fourth Gospel held of him (Warfield). By others (Harnack) he was in his own thought of himself and his mission a monotheist of the purest type whose whole thought and only thought was of God and the Kingdom of God, who had not the slightest thought of interjecting himself in any sense or to any degree between his brothermen and God.

The following presentation of Jesus' thought of himself is meant to be tentative. In spite of the fact that mediating views are apt to be unsatisfactory, it appears increasingly probable that in this case only a mediating view of some sort will meet the most important facts and satisfy the situation. At the heart and at the summit of Jesus' religious life and thought there were two dominant and all-engrossing conceptions, viz., his conception of God and his conception of the Kingdom of God. With Jesus, God is supreme, and never for one moment does he think of displacing or supplanting God as the sole and supreme object, not only

of his own affections and efforts, but also of the affections and efforts of his fellow-men (Mark 12:29, 30 ||). There can be no discounting of this fact so strongly emphasized by the religious-historical school of interpretation. And yet the records and experience of primitive Christianity demand caution in two directions. In the first place, the most careful and conscientious historical criticism leaves a residuum which demands for Jesus in his thought of himself a unique place, not only in the fate and fortune of his nation and of individual persons (Mark 1:22 ||; 2:9 f.; 8:28 ||; Matt. 23:29 f. = Luke 11:47 f.; Matt. 11:11 = Luke 7:28; Mark 2:21 f. ||; Mark 10:17 f.; Mark 10:45, etc.),[1] but also in his relation to God (Mark 1:11 || and in Q [second source]; Matt. 4:1–11 || = Luke 4:1–12; Mark 14:61 ||; Matt. 11:27 = Luke 10:22).[2] It is clear that Jesus possessed unique God-consciousness. The conditions of possessing it, however, were not exclusive or peculiar to himself. He expected others to share it, yet only through himself (Matt. 11:27). Its uniqueness was not necessarily a solitary, exclusive thing: it was a simple fact.[3] The incidents and words which remain after historical criticism of the synoptic picture of Jesus, indicate that in his own thought Jesus became the way to God, the mediator of this unique God-consciousness which for Jesus also implied salvation.[4] The liberal school recognizes this high place which Jesus took in his own thought and bearing—a certain commanding, Napoleonic attitude in the moral and spiritual realm of God and of national and human life. But with them it is simply the regular attitude of the prophet. It is doubtful however whether such an explanation will prove satisfactory. Some special explanation is demanded, and need not be feared provided one remembers constantly that it is the fact of Jesus' consciousness and men's experience that is of supreme and permanent value, not the explanation, even though it be the right one.[5]

[1] Weinel, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, sec. 32, recognizes this quite keenly.

[2] Harnack, *What Is Christianity?* p. 128, minimizes the depth and richness of this passage (Matt. 11:27). In its original form it was probably less Johannine in its atmosphere and significance, but in its clear depths rich personal relationships are mirrored rather than mere knowledge.

[3] Weinel, *op. cit.*, sec. 33, S. 185*b*.

[4] Weinel, *op. cit.*, sec. 24.

[5] The liberal school has done splendid work in presenting the historical Jesus. Because of the excellence of its work one is reluctant to criticize. But it is a fact that in one sentence they put such a high estimate upon Jesus that they place him permanently beyond our reach (Bousset, *Jesus*, p. 149: "He is, and must remain, beyond

In the second place, caution against over-accentuating the supremacy of God in Jesus' thought must be corrected by remembering that pregnant word of Jesus himself that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country and among his own kin and in his own house (Mark 6:4=Matt. 13:57). Rarely is a great man's significance rightly estimated by his own generation and his own people. But does this not apply to the great man himself? Can he see himself in his true significance? Can he evaluate himself and his work precisely? And even if he can, need he consciously insist on that evaluation and the position consonant therewith? In the increasing recognition of the contribution of the general social religious consciousness to the Christianity of the first century is it not necessary to make room for an added increment to the significance of Jesus, recognized not by himself but by the primitive Christian community? The immense results following in the wake of Jesus' life and death surely contributed something to the elucidation of Jesus' significance, much as the results following upon the publication of the origin of species contributed something to the elucidation of the significance of Darwin. The results of the Christian movement may quite legitimately show that Jesus' significance was greater, his position higher than he himself claimed, indeed than he himself was conscious of. It depends on a careful consideration of all the facts, not merely and only upon arriving at Jesus' own self-estimate.[1]

Next to the thought of God as Father, the conception of the Kingdom of God aroused the enthusiasm and engaged the attention and effort of Jesus. His thought of the Kingdom was not purely eschatological (Schweitzer), not purely inner and ethical (Harnack); not wholly future, not wholly present. Jesus changed the meaning and content of the terms Kingdom of God and Messiah for the better in much the same way as

our reach"), while in another sentence they tend to minimize his person and function. Their high estimate of Jesus leaves the impression of being somewhat reluctantly given. They reject the orthodox explanation of his uniqueness or divinity, yet they hold to his uniqueness without apparently feeling under obligation to give another and better explanation. They exalt Jesus beyond the confines and experiences of humanity as humanity is regularly considered, while they expect their readers nevertheless to consider Jesus as being wholly and only within the human category. An explanation of some kind is called for. The real heresy (if the unfortunate word may be permitted) is not that view which rejects the orthodox or any other explanation of the uniqueness of Jesus, but the view which holds to the uniqueness of Jesus and yet says that no special explanation of it is necessary. Bousset however makes some very helpful suggestions in "The Significance of the Personality of Jesus for Belief," *Proceedings of Fifth International Congress of Free Christianity*, 1910, p. 208.

[1] Case, *The Historicity of Jesus*, p. 272.

certain men changed the meaning and content of the word "tyrant" for the worse. Jesus eliminated the political element so prominent in the Jewish thought of his day (Mark 11:10; Acts 1:6, etc.; cf. the Zealot movement). Yet the Kingdom was with him no organization, at least in any formal sense. It was simply the company of those who with faith in God lived or sought to live the life of purity, simplicity, honesty, freedom, humility, service, and love, such as was pleasing to God and necessary to communion with the father—such as he himself enjoyed. To be sure, this new life was something more radical and intense than the mere stringing together of the foregoing words indicates. It might be described as a new birth, but Jesus had no technical or doctrinal name for it. Faith in the Father whom Jesus revealed, so to speak, released an inner spring which gave the impulse to return to God like the Prodigal in penitence, prayer, and devotion to God's will as supreme. Forgiveness, freedom from care and sorrow, confidence in the goodness and care of God, mingled with an element of fear, and hope for the future, follow. Men thus living together in love to God and their fellows form the heart and substance of the Kingdom of God in Jesus' conception of it.

Thus it may be said that in substance, even if not in expression and form, the Kingdom of God in Jesus' conception is something present, as some of his parables teach (Mark 4:30–32=Matt. 13:31 f.=Luke 13:18–21). The little company of the disciples was the beginning of the Kingdom (Mark 10:42 ||). But this is not all. Jesus realized, perhaps increasingly, that there was what he conceived to be a kingdom of this world, a kingdom of Satan over against the Kingdom of God (Mark 1:12, 13 ||). In the healing of men, in the casting out of demons (Matt. 12:28), in the work both of himself and his disciples, he saw the Kingdom of God coming (Luke 10:18; Mark 3:23). He evidently felt that by more enthusiastic effort on both his own part and that of his disciples he could hasten the coming of the Kingdom (Mark 1:35–39).[1] But he felt that the Kingdom was not fully come (Matt. 6:10=Luke 11:2), yea, that it could not fully come except by a world-catastrophe which was at the same time an act of God and a judgment of God which would set the seal upon his work and give him the supreme place in the Kingdom (Mark 10:35 f. ||). Jesus also felt his death as in some sense a necessary service for this coming of the Kingdom (Mark 8:27 f.). In all this Jesus shared the national and apocalyptic ideas of his time. Doubtless this element has been exaggerated by his reporters.

[1] Scott, *The Kingdom and the Messiah*, p. 134.

They put undue emphasis upon that which to them was supreme (Acts 1:6 f.). How much of this apocalyptic element Jesus himself shared no one can say precisely, but that he shared some of the eschatological views cannot successfully be denied, though he was very sober and restrained (Mark 13:32; Acts 1:6). Technically Jesus was not an apocalyptist, though he shared some of the apocalyptical views of his day.[1] If apocalyptic ideas had not been ready to hand, Jesus' consciousness and knowledge of God as Father, as good and holy, the enthusiasm of his life with God must have developed some other conception of the future final victory of God and righteousness. Jesus did not have the view of a world developing according to the modern scientific evolutionary conception. He could conceive of the consummation of the Kingdom only in the form of a personal victory of God and his Kingdom over Satan and his Kingdom. This must take some time; it must depend upon the will of God and upon the act of God. Hence Jesus' use of apocalyptic views. But they do not express the heart of his thought and message.

But Jesus felt himself called to be the chief instrument in God's hand of bringing in the Kingdom of God. No doubt the acceptance of this official duty of Messiahship sprang from Jesus' own deep and distinctive religious life in relation to the Father, and his conception of the messianic function was assimilated in large measure to his conception of life in communion and harmony with God and in earnest and aggressive fulfilment of his will. He poured into the title a new meaning distilled from the depths of his own deep religious experience of God and life. Most probably he felt the messianic call in the Baptism experience. If so, it was rooted in his sense of filial sonship which was also personal, ethical, religious.[2] The fact that the current messianic doctrine was not in harmony with this deep sense of sonship compelled Jesus to withhold the idea that he was the Messiah. When he claimed to be the Messiah, he wished the claim to be based, not on signs or on outward display, but upon inward merit and reality. Hence he did not proclaim himself Messiah, but expected his disciples and the people to discover it for themselves (Mark 8:27 ||; Matt. 11:4=Luke 7:22). He in a large measure spiritualized the concept of the Messiah as he did that of the Law and the Kingdom.

[1] Weinel, *op. cit.*, sec. 8.

[2] Cf. Luke 3:22, cod. D, "Thou art my son, today have I begotten thee," which reading may have been taken from Q by Luke; Wellhausen, *Einleitung*, S. 74; Harnack, *Sprüche und Reden Jesu*, S. 136, 218 f.

There is much uncertainty about the significance of the term Son of Man in Jesus' thought and usage, and the uncertainty seems to be increasing rather than diminishing. What was the origin and significance of the term?[1] Did Jesus use the term of himself, and if so to what extent and with what meaning? Was the term a current one for the Messiah in Jesus' day and if so, how could he use it of himself and keep his Messiahship secret till toward the close of his ministry? Difficulty and some uncertainty hover about the answers to these questions. It seems clear that in apocalyptic circles of Jesus' day the phrase "Son of Man" was used of the Messiah. In fact it gives to ὁ χριστός its particular New Testament content.[2] It is to be noted however that there is considerable variation in the form of the title indicating in all probability a lack of definiteness and fixedness in its meaning.[3] All things considered, it is entirely probable that Jesus used the term, though to what extent and with what significance it is difficult to say. A study of the passages in which the term occurs reveals two distinct classes, the one speaking of the Son of Man as lowly, destitute, suffering, a self-title of Jesus; the other, as exalted, coming upon the clouds of glory, like the Son of Man of apocalyptic. Weinel[4] holds that in this clear distinction there lies at once the main problem in connection with the title "Son of Man" and the solution of it. Only the latter, the eschatological passages, are really genuine, for only Jesus could say, "The Son of Man will come." Others would say, if the title denoted Jesus, "The Son of Man will come again." But though Jesus spoke of the Son of Man as another person, he himself considered himself the Son of Man, and so his reporters were not substantially wrong in giving him the title in the other group of passages.[5] Weinel rejects the idea that Jesus may have used the term just because it was many-sided and somewhat enigmatic. Someone would surely have asked its significance, as the Fourth Gospel represents the Jews doing later.[6] Is this argument not

[1] Babylonian, say Hommel (*Expository Times*, XI, 341 f.) and Zimmern (*Archiv für Religionswiss.*, II, 165, 1899), connecting it with the Adapa-Marduk myth; cf. also W. B. Kristensen, *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1911, De Term, "Zoon des Menschen," S. 1–38; F. P. Badham, *ibid.*, The title "Son of Man," S. 395–448.

[2] Book of Enoch, 36:1 ff.; 46:1 ff.; 48*a*:2, 11; 48*b*:2 *et passim;* cf. Volz, *Jüdische Eschatologie*, S. 214.

[3] Volz, *op. cit.*, S. 214: "Der Wechsel im Ausdruck zeigt aber, dass der Terminus noch nicht fixiert war."

[4] *Bib. Theol. d. N.T.*, S. 199.

[5] Weinel, *Bib. Theol. d. N.T.*, sec. 34, "Der Menschensohn."

[6] John 12:34: Who is this Son of Man?

too hypothetical and, so to speak, too clear-cut? There were various forms of the messianic hope current in Jesus' day in different circles. There was the narrow conception of the Zealots; there was the somewhat wider national hope which thought of the Messiah as Son of David (Luke 20:41); there was the wider apocalyptic conception of the Son of Man, current possibly only in comparatively limited circles; and there were various shades between.[1] Among the people with whom Jesus worked, and even with his disciples, Jesus might conceivably have occasionally used the title Son of Man, with more or less distinct reference to himself, even before he openly declared himself to them as the Messiah. But the element of uncertainty increases here. It is clear however that for some special reason Jesus preferred the title Son of Man rather than Son of David or Son of God, and that he used it at first possibly with latent but finally with open reference to himself. The same holds true substantially of the title "Messiah." That which impelled him to use these titles was his profound sense of Sonship. The titles formed the mold, the sense of Sonship gave to them their essential content.

Though very restrained in depicting the future, Jesus evidently expected (in spite of death, which he felt to be in some sense a means to an end) the overthrow of the kingdom of Satan, the establishment of the Kingdom of God some time in the near but unknown future, by some sort of special intervention of God himself. Possibly he felt assured of his own restoration, in spite of death, and so spoke of it to his disciples that on looking back they were satisfied that he had been speaking to them of his resurrection. With the consummation of the Kingdom of God, Jesus associated judgment, probably with himself as judge under God. Probably too he expected a general resurrection of some sort (Mark 10:40; Matt. 8:11, 12=Luke 13:28 f.).

Secondary then in Jesus' estimate of himself, but genuine, is his conception of himself as Messiah, of the future consummation of the Kingdom accompanied by resurrection and judgment and the overthrow of Satan and his kingdom; primary, is his profound consciousness of God and life with God begetting within him the conviction that salvation (though he does not use the term) consisted in or perhaps rather issued from this knowledge of God and life with God, and that he not only in his example and his teaching but in some way in his person mediated this knowledge of God and salvation which was something such

[1] Heitmüller, art. "Jesus Christus," II, 5b, *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Bd. III.

as not even the prophets had known, something new in the world (Matt. 10:37=Luke 14:26; Matt. 8:21=Luke 9:60; Matt. 13:17=Luke 10:23; Matt. 11:27 f.). This does not necessarily mean that Jesus required that men should believe in him for this salvation, as the Fourth Gospel represents, though this would seem to be a very natural and easy advance to make. It means only that Jesus in his own thought felt himself to be in some sense a mediator, yes, *the* (Matt. 11:27 f.) mediator in actual fact between God and men. In the last analysis, however, the difference on this point between the synoptic and the Johannine representation is more one of form than one of substance. In Johannine terminology the synoptic Jesus felt himself to be the revelation of God and the "way" to God.

3. PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN CHRISTOLOGY

From this tentative statement of Jesus' self-estimate we pass to the earliest Christian views of Jesus, the earliest Christian Christology. It has been commonly felt that from the time of their conviction of Jesus' resurrection the first Christians began forthwith to depart from Jesus' conception of himself. They began to lay the emphasis upon the secondary elements above mentioned and not upon the primary elements. This is true only in a measure. They laid emphasis on both primary and secondary elements in different degrees and at different times and places.

Beyond reasonable doubt the earliest form of Christology was that Jesus was the Messiah. During Jesus' life some at least believed, perhaps rather hoped, that he would prove to be the Messiah and would declare himself as such. But it was only their faith in the Resurrection of Jesus in which God declared him the Messiah and Son of God with power (Acts 2:36; Rom. 1:4) that crystallized this hope into an undying conviction. The early chapters of Acts (chaps. 1–12) represent this earliest Christology for which the Resurrection is decisive and pivotal. It is clearly adoptive. God wrought through Jesus, and because of his approval of him accepted and declared him Messiah and Lord by the resurrection (Acts 2:22 f.; 5:42). God glorified and exalted him (Acts 5:30 f.). God would send him again at the end of all things (Acts 3:20, 21). These experiences and hopes established a new and peculiar kind of life (Acts 5:20) initiated by repentance, faith in Jesus as Messiah, and baptism in his name (Acts 2:38; 8:16), and characterized by forgiveness of sins through Christ (Acts 3:26) and the gift of the Holy Spirit in his name (Acts 5:32). This was at least one if not the only form of the earliest Christology.

But, as already noted, these conceptions of Jesus immediately consequent upon his resurrection were not really the first beginnings of Christology, though very naturally they appeared to many to be so then and still appear to many to be so, owing to the overshadowing importance of the Resurrection. Unless violence is applied to the sources, it is clear that sometime before his death Jesus was regarded by some as prophet, by some as Messiah, whether as Son of David or as Son of Man or as Son of God. From both sources, Mark and the Sayings of Jesus, it is clear that the disciples and the very earliest tradition well remembered the discussions about the Messiahship and the strange experiences and high claims of Jesus in this regard, especially toward the close of his ministry. How did they relate this to their idea that the resurrection constituted Jesus the Messiah? They simply carried the adoptive theory of the Messiahship back into the history of the ministry of Jesus. Along one line they attached it to the experience upon the Mount of Transfiguration (Mark 9:7 ||), but with more assurance they attached the idea of adoption as Messiah and Son to the Baptism experience (Mark 1:11 ||) in which Jesus, according to the early Christian view, received the gift of the Spirit which constituted him Son.[1] The testimony of the sources that Jesus used the title Son of Man with either open or latent reference to himself seems at first to tell against the idea that the earliest Christians carried back the adoptive idea to the Baptism experience. But apart from the possibility of Weinel's explanation,[2] the phrase "Son of Man" with its accompanying idea of pre-existence was too limited and too indefinite to hinder the employment of the adoptive idea to explain the experiences and words of Jesus which the disciples and earliest Christians very well remembered. Possibly the adoptive idea, which was truly Semitic, vied for some time with its later rival, the "Son of Man" or pre-existence idea, which was in part Greek or at least Hellenistic as well as Jewish.

[1] Possibly the true text of Luke 3:22 is that of codex D: "Thou art my son: today have I begotten thee," thus meeting the word of Ps. 2:7 with the occasion of the Baptism. Cf. Gospel to the Hebrews in description of the Baptism: "My Son, in all the prophets I waited for you till you should come and I should find rest in you. For you are my rest, you are my firstborn son who rulest forever." Again, interpreting the Baptism as the occasion of the adoption to Messiahship and Sonship explains the otherwise extremely puzzling aorist, εὐδόκησα (Mk. 1:11), in a perfectly natural way, as an inceptive aorist.

[2] *Bib. Theol. d. N. Test.*, S. 198.

4. THE CHRISTOLOGY OF PAUL

At this stage the development of christological thought is taken up and carried on by Paul. For Paul too with the Christian community, the Resurrection means that Jesus is Messiah and Son of God (Phil. 2:9–11). Probably in this passage as in Rom. 1:4 there is a trace, a remnant of the adoptive idea of the earliest Christian community. But in reality Paul had discarded the adoptive idea probably as too superficial and not at all adequate to the proper expression of his profound experience of, and thought upon, the risen and glorified Christ. Paul used rather the category of pre-existence and the idea of Son of Man as the better expression of the Messiahship and Sonship of Jesus. Paul chose and elaborated this form because it was natural to him. He belonged to the educated Jewish and Hellenistic circles where the Son of Man concept which he transferred to Jesus as Messiah was familiar. Yet, as Paul does not wholly give up the idea of God's favoritism for Israel as a nation (Rom. 11:25, 26), so naturally he holds to the Son of David idea of Jesus as Messiah. But this is merely according to the flesh, and Paul lays little stress upon this. With Paul there begins an elaborate development of the higher category. For the expression of his experience of Jesus and salvation in him Paul lays hold of elements from various Hellenistic thought-circles of his day including the mystery-religions. On the basis of his personal experience, aided by thoughts of the Hebrew prophets as well as of the mystery-religions, Paul develops the original doctrine of mystical union with Christ by faith. By the death of Christ through faith, deliverance from the curse of the law, forgiveness, new life, new power, new hope for the coming age, and union with Christ—all which with many added elements constitute salvation—are secured. Of Paul, though in a lesser degree, it may be said as it was said of Jesus that soteriology not Christology is his main concern.

But Paul has also an elaborate Christology. The term "Son of Man" falls away and in its place comes the idea of the heavenly man, the second Adam, probably very closely related to the Son of Man idea. Jesus is identified with this pre-existent heavenly man, the second Adam. But this heavenly man is also Son of God. Paul nowhere reveals just in what sense he considers Jesus Son of God. Rom. 1:4 may very plausibly be interpreted so that Jesus is constituted "Son" by the Resurrection. But this adoptive idea can hardly express Paul's full thought. He considers Jesus a spirit-being (I Cor. 15:45; II Cor. 3:17), the firstborn of all creation (Col. 1:14 f.), who for a time dwelt upon the

earth (II Cor. 8:9) and was restored to greater glory than before (Phil. 2:6 f.). This spirit-being was Son of God, but in what sense? The Hebrew feeling of Sonship through sympathy, likeness, love is not excluded (Col. 1:13), but probably Paul thought, if he thought upon it specially, of Sonship in some of the Greek forms. It is clear that the Logos-doctrine is present in Paul, latent though not expressed[1] (I Cor. 8:6; 11:3). Christ is the creator and bond of the cosmos (Col. 1:16). He is the image of God (II Cor. 4:4). A certain degree of figurative, spiritual, and ethical meaning must not be denied to these and similar terms. But they clearly have a metaphysical force, and it is likely that Paul conceived of Christ as a second God somewhat after the fashion of Philo, with probably additional touches from the atmosphere and thought of the mystery-religions and of Stoicism. Paul also identified the heavenly Christ with the Spirit (II Cor. 3:7).[2] It is impossible here to go into the question of the relation of Paul and the New Testament as a whole to the Hellenistic syncretism of the mystery-religions of his day. How much of what has hitherto been placed genetically in direct relation either (1) to the historical Jesus, (2) to the Old Testament, or (3) to Alexandrianism must rather be related directly to the religious Hellenistic syncretism of the mystery-religions and considered rather as a parallel to Old Testament thought? In 1903 Heinrich Zimmern, after outlining the questions, says that investigation into this problem is as yet in its early stages and no definite answer can be given.[3] His statement will still hold, though much advance since then has been made, with the result that there is a strong tendency to affirm that much of New Testament thought of the person of Jesus is due to the fact that the first interpreters of Jesus in their effort to set forth from their experience his supreme significance, used the terms and thought-forms current in the atmosphere and religious thought of their day.[4]

[1] Weinel, *op. cit.*, S. 368*a*.

[2] Reitzenstein, *Poimandres*, S. 39.

[3] Zimmern, *Keilinschriften und Bibel:* "Eine definitive Antwort lässt sich bis jetzt noch auf keine dieser die schwierigsten Probleme der orientalischen Religionsgeschichte berührenden fragen geben . . . . von einer endgültigen Lösung dieser Probleme noch keine Rede sein kann, die Erörterung über sie vielmehr noch in den ersten Anfängen steht."

[4] Cf. also Zimmern, *Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*,[3] S. 372–94, and the whole chapter "Der Christus, Jesus" in his *Keilinschriften und Bibel*. The whole subject is receiving intense attention at present, but there is no justification for the extreme position taken by Drews as a result of it that there was no historical Jesus. This is a wholly unwarranted interpretation of the facts which rather go to show simply that to a greater degree than has been hitherto supposed the formal, doctrinal, ritual, largely external portion of Christianity was a part of the religious milieu of the time and indeed in a large measure grew out of it.

Presumably these elements from the mystery-religions, whether Graeco-Persian or Graeco-Egyptian, were mediated to Paul by the popular eclectic philosophy of the day. They are in all probability the following: (1) the idea of Jesus' pre-existence as the heavenly man, the second Adam, a divine spirit-being who was also Creator of the world, Son of God and heavenly man; cf. Adapa-Marduk, son of Ea, and world-creator; (2) the idea of Jesus as sent into the world by God appearing as Savior and destined to be the inaugurator of the new era (Gal. 4:4); cf. Mithra's rôle in the Persian cult; (3) the idea of the temporary humiliation and suffering of Christ; cf. Osiris in the Egyptian cult and the star-deities, Sin, Samaš, and Ištar in the Babylonian cult; (4) the idea of the Resurrection and exaltation and coming again of Christ; (5) the idea of two opposing worlds with the thought that Christ shall reign till he shall conquer all enemies, even death.[1]

Paul laid great emphasis upon eschatology, especially in the earlier part of his life and work. As soon as he accepted the historical Jesus as the Messiah he assigned to him the rôle of the Jewish Messiah whom he already had in mind. The period of the earthly life of Jesus was a temporary and preparatory period of humiliation and suffering. But Jesus would come again and fulfil the eschatological rôle of the Jewish Messiah. With the coming of Christ the dead would be raised (II Thess. 2:1–12 if Pauline; I Cor., chap. 15), the living would be changed or transformed, the judgment-seat of Christ would be set (I Thess. 2:19, 20; II Cor. 5:10; 11:15), all enemies and evil, including death, would be overcome, ending in the final consummation of the messianic Kingdom and the surrender by Christ of his high prerogative as mediator and vicegerent, so that God might be immediate ruler and "all in all' (I Cor. 15:24–28). Eschatology is prominent in Paul. It is urged as an impulse to worthy practical Christian living (I Cor. 15:58) and as the consummation of salvation and life (Rom. 13:11).

5. DIVERGENT MOVEMENTS AFTER PAUL

But this highly developed christological doctrine of Paul, with its accompanying elaborate theology and profound mysticism and scant emphasis upon the earthly life of Jesus, was not wholly satisfactory to the primitive Christian church. In substance Paul's view of Jesus as the Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God, a divine, pre-existent spirit-being, whose earthly life was a short period of humiliation and veiled glory and

[1] Cf. H. A. A. Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery-Religions* (1913).

power, was accepted by the primitive church, but various and considerable modifications were made in different directions.

It was a striking conviction, gained after much anguish and struggle of mind and soul, that the one who appeared to Paul on the way to Damascus was none other than Jesus of Nazareth, risen and living, and that he was the Messiah. The result was that Paul applied to the historical Jesus many concepts which were proper and becoming only to an abstract figure of the religious and philosophical imagination—ideas whose *Heimat* was the world of the eternal and invisible. The tendency of the Pauline Christology was to lose the historical figure of Jesus in the drapings of religious and philosophical ideas. This tendency is easily discoverable in Paul himself on comparing his earliest with his latest works (I Thess. vs. Col.). In it there lay the subtle danger of the so-called "entangling alliance" of history on the one hand, and religion and philosophy on the other, an alliance which apparently defies disentangling. The natural result was divergent movements, one radical, leading to a still greater emphasis of the eternal, a second apocalyptic, and a third reactionary, emphasizing history.

a) *The reactionary movement.*—The reactionary movement was probably first in time after Paul. Men, some of them Paul's associates in his work, none of them associates of Jesus, accepted indeed the Pauline identification of the Messiah, Son of Man and Logos with Jesus of Nazareth, but felt that Paul made too meager a use of the detailed information of the words and deeds of Jesus preserved in the tradition of the early community and in part written down in various fragmentary documents. This information was needed especially for the gentile mission. Thus we find the synoptists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, counteracting or perhaps complementing the christological doctrine of Paul. In the main they accept the Pauline doctrine, but they add the outlines of the actual historical figure adapted to be sure in many respects to the later doctrine.

The Gospel of Mark (65–70 A.D.), the oldest of our present Gospels at least, is interested chiefly—almost solely—in the public activity and ministry of Jesus, his healing and miracle-working power, and but slightly in his teaching. Mark considered Jesus the Son of God, but like Paul, does not reveal how or in what sense. His quoting of the remark of the centurion at the cross (Mark 15:39) probably indicates Greek leanings, and it is likely that Mark with Paul considered Jesus as essentially a divine spirit-being who became man, though he does not say how. His Sonship was latent, recognized with difficulty (Mark

15:39) or only by the demons (3:11; 5:7), as was also his Messiahship (8:29). Mark considers Jesus also as the heavenly man and with the idea retains no doubt rightly the phrase "Son of Man," which Paul dropped. Mark gives a vivid picture also, as he intended to do, of the humanity of Jesus, a picture clearer and stronger than that of any other Gospel (1:41; 2:8; 3:5; 4:38; 8:5; 10:14; 10:17, 40). He gives the most satisfactory outline of the main events and developments of his ministry.

The question as to how much in this Gospel (as in the others) belongs to Mark himself and the primitive Christian community will vary from less to more according to the evidence of historical criticism and each man's tendency or inclination. It may be that the demands of a high Christology caused the Christian community and Mark with them to push back into the life and work of Jesus much more than has yet been recognized. After outlining Mark's testimony to the amazing dulness and stupidity of the disciples Case maintains that this dulness serves as a means for carrying back later thought.[1] But whatever the extent of this pushing back of thoughts and practices of a later time into the life of Jesus may prove to be, it need not, and cannot, as Case splendidly shows, annul the historicity of Jesus, diminish the uniqueness and power of his personal religious life with God, invalidate the resurrection appearances, or destroy the experience of salvation in some sense through Jesus which is after all the fundamental fact in and impulse toward the development of any Christology.

It is clear, then, that Mark has a high Christology, Pauline in its main lines, to which he adds a vivid picture of the human side of Jesus, of his prophetic activity as preacher of repentance, herald of the Kingdom of God, and worker of miracles as well as teacher—a picture which shows indications of being unconsciously molded and changed to a greater or less degree, both by the adoption Christology of the early Christians and by the higher Christology of Paul.

Matthew and Luke naturally manifest a still greater degree of change of the early tradition, of the life, activity, and teaching of Jesus. Their common non-Markan source or sources represents Jesus consist-

[1] *The Historicity of Jesus*, 1912, p. 226: "In all this Mark is clearly recognizing that Jesus made no such impression upon his contemporaries as his later interpreters thought he ought to have produced, and as they would have him produce on the minds of believers in their day. But by making the blindness of Jesus' associates responsible for this failure, the early theologians could still think of him as displaying unique power commensurate with their faith in him as the heavenly Lord, and at the same time they could harmonize the history with their Christology."

ently, however, as the great prophetic teacher, rather than divine healer and miracle worker. As this source (or sources) of the teachings of Jesus is generally considered to be somewhat earlier than Mark and largely free from the tendency to miracle and Christology, it leads many to think that Mark as well as the later writers have very materially altered the original representation of Jesus. It must be remembered, however, that it was the custom of the time to distinguish to a greater or less degree between the deeds and the words of a teacher (Acts 1:1). The need for the teaching was naturally felt first and strongest.

The most striking addition of Matthew and Luke to christological doctrine is found in the story of the miraculous conception as displayed in their infancy narratives. Unless the story here given is considered as fact in some way hidden from Paul and Mark, it requires considerable time for its development and indicates a late date, say, toward the end of the first century and a decisive advance upon the Christology of Paul and Mark. It is conceived as an explanation of the uniqueness and greatness of Jesus and of the *modus operandi* of his Sonship. It is a composite, a blend in all probability of Old Testament ideas, the adoption-Christology of the primitive community, and the conceptions of the various mystery-religions with added Greek elements.[1] The thought itself is probably Greek, but the prominence of the Holy Spirit as well as the general context indicates a strong Semitic element. In fact it is probably in a measure a further pushing back of the idea of adoption as it is found in the Baptism experience in which the Holy Spirit plays a quite similar rôle. The Greek element appears distinctly, however, in that the story explains the Sonship as metaphysical, that is, essential.[2] Paul and Mark had felt no need of such an explanation. In fact, such an explanation seems out of harmony with the idea of pre-existence, about which Matthew and Luke say nothing. In many other respects Matthew tends to a heightened Christology (Matt. 8:8, 16; 12:28; 21:20).[3] With Paul he emphasized the eschatological element and specifically the death of Christ as necessary in the divine plan (16:21, 23) as redemptive (26:28) and ratifying a new covenant (20:28; 26:28).

[1] Granbery, *Outline of New Testament Christology*, p. 57 and n. 1; Petersen, *Wunderbare Geburt des Heilandes*, Kap. 3, "Die übernatürliche Geburt Jesu im Lichte der Religionsgeschichte."

[2] J. Weiss, *Christus*, S. 81; cf. Inscription at Priene, quoted by Pfleiderer in *Monist*, XIV, 5.

[3] Allen, *Commentary on Matthew*, pp. xxxi–xxxiii; cf. also his summary of the Christology, p. lxvi.

Luke does not so fully reveal his personal christological standpoint. It is however strongly Pauline, charged with the universal gentile spirit, and emphasizes strongly the human element in Jesus in addition to the Pauline lines.

But the synoptists were not the only reactionaries against the Pauline extreme which discounted the earthly life and teaching of Jesus. The great majority of Christians, even the personal disciples of Jesus, were not so original, independent, and creative as Paul. They therefore fell back on Jesus' specific deeds and words. A spiritual bond, like a great cable reaching into the unseen, held Paul true to Jesus in the main, though not in detail, in spirit, though not in form. Paul felt the fullest freedom in beating out his own views of truth, centering them all about the Incarnation and the cross of Christ as the great redemptive triumph for the world. Very largely he formed his own molds with material gathered from every quarter, but he filled them with the spirit of the gospel of Jesus. It will be found that essentially Paul represented and developed the message of his master Jesus.[1]

But less independent and original spirits could not have broken this new way, and indeed could not even follow Paul's lead without greater support from Jesus himself. Hence our Synoptic Gospels. But even where the writing did not take the new form of a Gospel, the reaction toward more support from Jesus himself is seen. Two such writings are the Epistle of I Peter and the Epistle to the Hebrews. These two writings are in some way closely related.[2] They probably spring from the same general situation and atmosphere and express an unconscious reaction against the mystical depth of Paulinism and its disregard of the experiences of the earthly Jesus. They both make much of the experience of suffering; they are both rather practical than profound or mystical; they both exhort after the fashion of a homily; they both emphasize the death of Christ as propitiatory in a similar way; they make much of hope, of the future glory of Christ and Christians, of the inspiration of the prophets, of the reproach and sufferings of the preexistent Christ (I Pet. 1:11; cf. Heb. 11:26). The Epistle to the Hebrews, however, makes larger use of the experiences of Jesus' earthly life than does I Peter. It makes an astonishingly close approach to the modern psychological developmental view of the reflex action of suffering upon character, both for Christ (Heb. 5:7–10) and for Christians (12:7).

[1] A. Meyer, *Jesus or Paul*, p. 106.

[2] Holtzmann, *Handcommentar zum N. T.*, III, "Der Brief an die Hebräer," Einleitung, II, 3.

Unlike Paul, Hebrews deliberately states that the salvation which it proclaims was first proclaimed by Jesus when on earth (2:3), and was delivered by faithful witnesses (2:3). Paul would not make such connections. Paul claims indeed the identity of inner personality between the exalted Christ and the earthly Jesus, but he is not concerned to make such detailed connection. The writer to the Hebrews follows the same main christological lines as Paul—pre-existence, incarnation, redemptive death, resurrection, and exaltation. He has the main eschatological lines also, though with less emphasis and prominence, viz., parousia, judgment, transformation of the world, yet in a way different from that of Paul (Heb. 12:27, 28). The writer develops the idea of the sacrifice and High-Priesthood of Jesus in detail as Paul does not do.

b) *The apocalyptic movement.*—Another divergent tendency of a more radical type may be noted in writings belonging to this same period, viz., *ca.* 90 A.D. This tendency may be called apocalyptic.[1] Apocalyptic views were common property at this period. Paul shared them very strongly, especially at the beginning of his Christian career, though there is evidence of a loss of interest and emphasis toward the end. Jesus the Messiah had suffered death, but he would come again to fulfil those expectations of glory and triumph which they had in their shortsightedness expected of him at his first coming. So the early Christians reasoned. Thus apocalyptic could still breathe the breath of life. Its activity was increased also by persecutions. Now Paul did not paint the glories of the future triumph of Christ and Christians with sufficient color or in sufficient detail. He was too moderate, too severely ethical, perhaps, and mystical. Hence such a writing as the Apocalypse of John, the only representative of its type in the Canon of the New Testament, but a writing which probably represents the views of a fairly large number of Christians at this time. Its Christology is clearly post-Pauline. "The dignity, glory, and authority of Christ and the greatness of his redeeming work are set forth in exalted terms and the strongest imagery is employed (1:5). He is a priest (1:13), is Lord of the church (1:12–16), is pre-existent and eternal, and determines who shall enter and who be released from the realms of the dead (1:8, 17, 18; 21:6; 22:13), is King of kings and Lord of lords (17:14; 19:16), is the bright, the morning star that will rise upon the world to usher in the consummation (22:16). . . . . Given titles that belong to God, and worshiped by men and angels, Christ reigns not only during the earthly millennium,

[1] Granbery, *Outline of New Testament Christology*, pp. 87–91.

but sits with God in the final consummation."[1] The apocalyptic tendency toward external glory and imagery has carried the writer even beyond the Christology of Paul. Christ is closely associated with God (19:11–16; 21:22; 22:1, 3).

c) *The radical movement.*—But the climax of christological development within the New Testament is found in the Johannine writings, particularly the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle. For some years the Fourth Gospel has been closely studied. It is still in many respects an enigma and may always be. But certain main lines in connection with it are standing out more clearly as a result of the work. From the religio-historical point of view, if not from the literary point of view, it is a unit. The historical element in it is quite subsidiary, though not without some value even in the strictly historical sense; it is selected and used for the purpose of a religious and theological interpretation of Jesus. The Gospel is partly apologetic and polemic.[2] It manifests the greatest influence by and the closest approach to the mystery-religions so prevalent at the end of the first century A.D.

In fact, as Christianity on its mission to the gentiles moved out into the religious and philosophical *milieu* of the Graeco-Roman world, it found itself confronted everywhere with conceptions of great worth and vitality—conceptions of human need, human helplessness and sinfulness, conceptions of divine helpfulness, mercy, and salvation, of divine Saviors, of divine revelations, and of life, light, truth, resurrection, immortality, and future blessedness through association and union of God and man. These were abstract conceptions, to be sure, and therein lay their weakness and their danger. Gnosticism is the term applied to the sum-total of these conceptions. But strictly speaking these are the conceptions of the mystery-religions. Gnosticism is the term to describe them after they have passed through the alembic of Christianity. Now the writer of the Fourth Gospel confronted this religious and philosophical thought-world of the mystery-religions. It is not impossible to suppose that he was himself a convert to Christianity from this thought-world of the mystery-religions. In any case he sympathizes with much that they contain. He realizes that if Christianity is to hold its own and win the day it must absorb their vital elements and express itself in terms of their conceptions. He is perfectly confident that Christianity is the supreme religion, and he sets himself to the task of presenting it as such.

[1] Granbery, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

[2] E. F. Scott, *The Fourth Gospel*, chap. iii.

Only a brief outline of his christological attitude can be given and comparison drawn between him and other New Testament writers. The Fourth Gospel uses the titles "Christ" or "Messiah" (1:17; 1:20, 25; 3:28; 10:24, etc.), "Son of Man" (1:51; 3:13, 14; 6:27, etc.), "King of Israel" (1:49), and "Lord" (1:23; 6:23; 11:2, etc.); but they have all lost their primitive Semitic meaning and have become more or less technical and conventional. The term "Lamb of God" is important for the Fourth Gospel, as it indicates the writer's firm faith in the redemptive sacrificial death of Jesus. A still more striking term however is "Logos," so prominent in the Prologue. Though the term does not occur elsewhere in the Gospel, the doctrine is assumed throughout. Jesus was the Logos in the beginning, but the characteristic thought of the writer is that the Logos became flesh and thus revealed God in the form of man. In this respect the Fourth Gospel fully developed that idea which, though plainly present, was nevertheless somewhat latent in Paul and Hebrews. The writer of the Fourth Gospel is generally credited with taking the term from Philo, but it is more likely that it came from semi-popular usage. At any rate, as compared with Philo's usage, that of the Fourth Gospel is less abstract, more concrete and personal, full of a sense of reality and saving significance through identification with the historical Jesus.

But the most common and the most significant designation of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel is the title "Son" or "Son of God," denoting the relation of Jesus to God whom he frequently calls his Father. The term is surprisingly rich in content. As Son Jesus is pre-existent, only-begotten, one with God the Father by whom he was sent and to whom he is always subject (1:14; 3:35, etc.). He enlightens and saves the world by communicating the teaching and the truth which he has received from the Father. He fulfils Scripture, bestows the Spirit by whom he is himself filled, displays supernatural knowledge, gives eternal life and future blessedness with the Father, to whom he returns. Prayer in his name is effective (14:13 f.), and abiding in him makes the Christian life fruitful (15:1, 2). In short, Jesus, not only in his deeds and words, but in his person, not only in the future, but in the present, is the revelation of the invisible God the Father, eternally the Son of God and the way to life and light and truth and God which is salvation. Accordingly the Gospel was written that its readers might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing they might have life in his name (John 20:21).

In conclusion, it may be said that the Johannine Christology presents

formally a fusing of the Christology of Paul, which emphasizes the eternal and divine in Christ at the expense of the historical and earthly, with the reactionary Christology of such writings as Hebrews and the Synoptic Gospels. The gnostic systems of Paul's day and later had pushed the higher side, the divine side of the Pauline Christology to violent extremes issuing in Docetism. The Gnostics emphasized the pre-existent, the divine, at the expense of, even with the annihilation of, the human element. Such writings as Hebrews and the synoptists reacted and added the human by emphasizing the historical life of Jesus —his human nature. The Fourth Gospel aims to meet the violent extremes of Gnosticism, such as Docetism, but has itself such deep sympathy with and regard for the vital truths in Gnosticism that it carries the Pauline emphasis on the divine to quite a new extreme, viz., the eternal divinity of Jesus Christ as Logos and Son. Not merely in his Incarnation and Death did Jesus reveal God and bring salvation. Jesus revealed God in his life on earth, his daily life. Those who could not see the divine glory even in the earthly Jesus were blinded (14:22) by ignorance and evil. They were of the world. But Jesus on earth declared God (1:18), though his future glory would be enhanced. His life was a constant revelation of God. Hence no need of a transfiguration as in the Synoptic Gospels. The synoptic writers did not advance to the idea that Jesus was the eternal revelation and declaration of the glory and character of God. They with Paul thought of the "days of his flesh" as a period of humiliation, sacrifice, and suffering only. Hebrews advances somewhat on the Pauline idea in making more of the earthly Jesus like the synoptists and in making Jesus' place in relation to God apparently permanent. Jesus in Hebrews is the constant vicegerent of God. Paul, Hebrews, and the synoptists all reveal closer dependence than the Fourth Gospel on the christological ideas of the primitive Christian community in that they all show traces in lessening degree of the adoptive idea of Sonship. The Fourth Gospel has broken with the adoptive idea altogether. The idea of Sonship in the Fourth Gospel approaches that of the mystery-religions, in which Sonship consists in wisdom and perfect knowledge of the divine. The Fourth Gospel does not have the idea of the miraculous conception as Matthew and Luke, nor the theocratic or adoptive idea of the primitive community. In a very true and deep sense the Fourth Gospel has carried to its climax what appears to have been Jesus' own sense of Sonship (Matt. 11:27). Like Jesus, the Fourth Gospel has discounted the "Son of David" idea in connection with the Messiahship. It has also discounted the

eschatological element. The parousia has been largely spiritualized into the abiding presence of Christ through the presence of the Spirit or Comforter whom he will send. The future judgment and resurrection have become spiritualized and made present experiences. In this reduction of the eschatological element the Fourth Gospel is also at one with Jesus. The writer has developed, enlarged, made objective and absolute the feeling which Jesus himself had, viz., that the Son alone knew the Father and that only the Son could therefore adequately reveal the Father to men. And moreover he has sincerely tried to do this without destroying the historical Jesus, indeed by using the historical Jesus and stoutly maintaining his humanity. The modern critic can see his failures; he feels that the writer of the Fourth Gospel has warped the historical and human in Jesus. But the mistakes of the writer need not and do not invalidate his fundamental thesis that, religiously speaking, Jesus is the final revelation of God because he actually leads men to God. Even the modern critic, indeed especially the modern critic, is beginning to see that in the historical Jesus there is the satisfying and efficient revelation of God. In this he is substantiating the main truth of the Fourth Gospel.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It has been the custom with scholars to class the Epistle to the Hebrews with those epistles which, though bearing marks of strong Pauline influence, cannot with sufficient certainty be assigned to the great apostle himself.[1] They have taken form under the shadow of the figure of Paul and are called "deutero-Pauline."

In the course of this study numerous instances of contact with Pauline thought have appeared. But in every case the similarity has been somewhat superficial. The point of view and the method of presentation have been quite different. It would be exaggerating to say that the writer of this Epistle was not influenced by Paul and his letters. But it is clear that this influence has been greatly exaggerated. Holtzmann, von Soden, and Brückner have all emphasized dependence upon Paul, and their cases are strong for some measure of dependence. But in many of the cases which they cite the similarity is to be assigned to common sources rather than to direct contact. The tradition and doctrine of the primitive Christian church were the common source of much that is similar in Paul and the writer of Hebrews. In other cases of contact the similarity is eclipsed by the dissimilarity. Our author is original and characteristic in his presentation of thoughts and doctrine that are also Pauline.

The writer of this Epistle had not the religious genius of Paul. He was intense, but not with the intensity and abandon that characterized Paul. He was intellectual and religious, though not profound and mystical. But he should not be put in the shadow of the great apostle, for he was not dominated by him. He deserves to stand alone as presenting a distinctive view of Christian experience and thought.

And as his general view of Christian truth is distinctive, even more is his Christology distinctive. It is not predominantly Pauline. Paulinism is one of the strands in it, but it is subordinate. The Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews is not strictly a unity. It is a composite formed amid the atmosphere of the mystery-religions by the union of the views of the primitive Christian church with the writer's Alexandrian views of the Logos, the distinctively Pauline view forming a third but subordinate strand. In many respects the distinctively Pauline view

[1] Ephesians, I and II Timothy, and Titus. Cf. Moffatt, *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, Chap. iii.

itself approached closely to the Alexandrian view of the Logos in substance though not in form. This has helped to give color to the view that Hebrews is "deutero-Pauline." But the proper way to view the movement is not to think of the writer of Hebrews as approaching the Logos doctrine by combining the primitive Christian and distinctively Pauline views, but rather to think of him as approaching the Pauline view by combining the primitive Christian view with the Alexandrian Logos doctrine. This attempt to combine the two views produces in Hebrews what Harnack calls the "pneumatic Christology"[1] as over against its chief rival in the apostolic age, the "adoption Christology."[2] Harnack fails to see what an important part the adoption Christology plays in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In the primitive Christian view, which the writer of Hebrews sought to combine with the Alexandrian, there were the two rival Christologies, the adoption and the pneumatic.[3] It is difficult to say how far the writer of Hebrews used the primitive Christian pneumatic view, for the Alexandrian thought when applied to a historic person would produce something very similar to the pneumatic view. It is likely that the writer belonged to a circle of Christians who held both the adoption and the pneumatic views, though strictly speaking they are mutually exclusive. Harnack says that the two "came very near each other when the Spirit of God implanted in the man Jesus was conceived as the pre-existent Son of God."[4] The adoption view was especially strong at Rome,[5] and this may be another link uniting our author with the Roman church.

It is at any rate clear that in addition to the Alexandrian and pneumatic views, which cannot be clearly distinguished, our author had accepted the adoption Christology of the primitive church and used the language of this view. Moreover, his emphasis on the humanity of Jesus, on the qualities of character which to the Oriental more than to the Occidental indicated a noble God-fearing man, on the development of his character through suffering, on his exaltation of character—all

[1] Harnack, *History of Dogma*, I, pp. 190 f., 192, n. 1.

[2] *Ibid.*, I, p. 191, n. 1.

[3] *Ibid.*, I, chap. iii, sec. 6.

[4] *Ibid.*, I, p. 193.

[5] Eusebius, *H.E.*, V, 28, 3; cf. Harnack, *op. cit.*, I, p. 191, n. 1: "The representatives of this [adoption] Christology, who in the third century were declared to be heretics, expressly maintained that it was at one time the ruling Christology at Rome and had been handed down by the apostles."

these and many other elements are in essential harmony with the adoption view. In this respect Hebrews is with the synoptists rather than with Paul.

On the other hand, the writer as distinctly holds the "pneumatic" view since he holds that Jesus was a pre-existent spirit-being, identifying him with the Logos of Philo, though he does not use the term. The truth is that he has failed to fuse the two views. He speaks of an inception of Sonship, yet leaves the impression that the Son was eternal. More than Paul he subordinates Jesus to God, comparing him as a spirit-being to the angels. Yet he applies to him the term θεός, though only indirectly, and he uses language so exalted (1:3) as to indicate that he probably conceived of Christ as an eternal spirit-being in some unique relation to God as compared with other spirit-beings, a relation however which he does not define.

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